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GREVILLE:

OR,

A SEASON IN PARIS.

BY MRS. GORE,

AUTHORESS OF

"MRS. ARMYTAGE," "THE PEERESS," ETC.

"Oh! English people,—English people!—why can you not stay and perish of apoplexy and Yorkshire pudding at home?"—

PELHAM.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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GREVILLE;

OR,

A SEASON IN PARIS.

CHAPTER I.

Il faut en finir avec cette reine douairière; qui d'ailleurs prolonge de la manière la plus illégale l'exercice de son autorité.

BERNARD.

A WIDOWED countess, possessing a sufficient jointure and an only son arrived at years of discretion, is a personage to whom the gay world is sure to concede becoming respect. Between the men who have views upon herself, and the women who have views upon the young earl, a considerable number of potent links are created between her ladyship's interests and those of society.

Harriet, Countess of Greville, enjoyed to the utmost the advantages of such a position. She was a woman of high descent and honourable alliances, of good appearance and unblemished character. No one remembered much of the circumstances of her married life. The late Earl was much her senior in years,—a valetudinarian,—almost a misanthrope.—They had lived out of the world, forgetting and forgotten; and when the newspapers at length related that the sick man was no more, and that the young Earl, a boy of only eight years old, was left to the sole guardianship of his mother, nobody cared much about the matter, except a distant cousin,—the heir presumptive;—who had some hopes that the child might be killed with kindness, if the Countess were not tempted to marry again.

She never was. The young Earl grew up into manhood, and his parent was still a widow. By the will of his father, he was not to attain his majority till the age of five-and-twenty; and though most of his college friends agreed among themselves that in this particular "Greville was

deucedly ill-used," that "it was doubtless by the influence of his mother over the late Earl she had attained such extraordinary authority over the fate and fortunes of her unlucky son." —such was the respect testified towards her by the young Lord, that no one presumed to say more to *him* than that "it was a monstrous nuisance to be so hampered!"

Whether Greville were of the same opinion, it was impossible to conjecture. Habitually reserved, passing his holidays and vacations alone with his mother at Greville Abbey, he was graver than was either natural to his years, or than altogether became them. His inferiors thought him proud,—his playmates, dull. He was, in fact, merely undemonstrative, from having had the gay impulses of childhood checked by the society of persons older than himself. There was no sweet sister to compassionate his grievances; not even a pretty cousin to be fallen in love with; and Greville became a melancholy boy, and, in time, a silent man.

The Countess, meanwhile, was one of those

mild, measured personages who are supposed to have no will of their own, because they never assert one. Greville Abbey, prosperous and orderly, was so methodical in its routine, that everything seemed to proceed mechanically and without the exercise of a supreme authority. Deliberate in her movements, low in voice, gentle in demeanour, Lady Greville seemed to differ little from other well-bred middle-aged women. She was choice without being fashionable in her attire; cheerful, without being lively. While her son was still at Eton, people spoke of her as simply a good neighbour, a prudent mother, a sensible woman. Nobody cared much about her; but nobody was heard to say a syllable to her disparagement. And though by the time Lord Greville quitted College, the county of Oxford and coteries of London began to discover that she was a charming person, a very superior woman, one who had made most extraordinary sacrifices to keep single for the sake of an only son, there was, in truth, but little difference between the Countess at forty and the Countess at forty-five.

Of the multitudes who belauded her, however, none thought so highly of her as her son. Greville, who had never had anything else to love, bestowed upon her all the affections of his young heart. She had taken care not to provide him with tutors too agreeable; and the disagreeable tutors had taken care that he should not attach himself too familiarly to companions of his own age. The Countess was consequently his familiar friend as well as his second providence. All that depended upon her care to render his home delightful, except youthful companionship, was sedulously afforded; and as this sole privation was attributed, in his hearing, to intense care for his morals and happiness, amid the levity of a dissolute age, he grew accustomed to seeing old faces about him, and satisfied with the sympathy and friendship of his mother.

If, as it has been before observed, any new light broke in upon the young Earl in the course of his Oxford life, he was too dutiful a son to render any human being cognizant of his opinion.

A period was now approaching, however, to which Lady Greville had always looked forward with consternation. The Earl, her darling Hugo, her idolized Hugo, had just completed his twenty-first year; — a man, though still a minor, — a man, though a legal nonentity. Strikingly handsome, and awkward only in consequence of his strict education and secluded habits of life, she knew that certain inevitable evils must follow his introduction into fashionable society. He would be snapt up by some manœuvring mamma as a husband for her daughter, or devoured by the noble sharpers of some unexceptionable club.—His person and his forty thousand per annum were in imminent danger!—She had failed in making a bookworm of him,—she had failed in making a sportsman of him; under which circumstances, it was impossible to expect that he could fix himself at Greville Abbey, in a singularly dull neighbourhood, more than ten months of the year; and during the remaining two, what mischiefs might not be engendered!—

There was but one resource,—travel—foreign

travel. During an autumn at Cowes, the young Earl luckily imbibed a taste for yachting, and became proprietor of one of the Antelopes or Ariels, thrown every season into the market by the ruin or untimely end of the proprietors. The following summer, enchanted with his new pursuit, he proposed a cruise in the Mediterranean; and thus favoured in her projects, Lady Greville, whose health was really impaired by the fidgets and responsibilities of her position, got herself ordered to the South; and while her son dreamed only of being "spell-bound among the clustering Cyclades," or amusing himself with an excursion to the Egyptian cataracts, she resolved to establish herself at Naples to await his return.

The absence of the family was likely to be little noticed in Oxfordshire. The hospitalities of the Abbey were at all times limited. Lord Greville had formed no friendships or connexions with society,—his mother had curtailed hers from views of worldly policy; and, as the same number of chaldrons of coals, and the same provision of blankets, was to be distributed at Christ-

mas to the poor of the village, no one had a right to complain. The school-children were not sorry to escape "my lady's" austere inspection of their monthly catechization; and the keepers much better pleased to poach his lordship's hares and pheasants for their own market, than to escort him through his preserves. Except that the shutters of the state apartments were closed, for the cultivation of damp and the injury of the pictures, and that the lawn was growing a little weedy, the aspect of the Abbey was more cheerful after their departure than during the residence of the Countess.

One person alone was dissatisfied. Some four miles from the park gates, stood the old-fashioned residence of Mr. Massingberd, a country gentleman of independent fortune and independent mind; whose lady, having married her daughters and exercising no control over her only son, had spare time on her hands to take considerable interest in the proceedings of the great family. It was not often she could obtain the attention of her husband; whose mornings were occupied with the cultivation of his estate,

and his evenings with that of his understanding. But there is a spare half-hour in English domestic life, which commits even the most repugnant of husbands to the custody of his spouse,—between the withdrawal of the servants after dinner and the announcement of tea. Poor Massingberd was glad enough when the signal of release arrived. The pause between farming and reading was the only disagreeable moment of his day. Meanwhile, when Mrs. Massingberd was troubled with a fit of prosing, he was not forced to favour her with his attention or his replies further than suited his convenience; the duty of politeness not being included in his category of conjugal virtues.

It was probably because hopeless of an answer that, one doleful autumnal evening, as they sat at their solitary dessert, Mrs. Massingberd restricted her efforts at sociability to a series of heavy sighs.

"You have eaten too many filberts, my dear,—you will give yourself an indigestion," observed the squire, on finding that the sixth "heigh ho!" was uttered almost in a tone of interrogation.

"If you look on my plate, Mr. Massingberd, you will find that I have not touched *one!*" replied the lady, swelling with indignation. "Just like you!—because you see me nervous and out of spirits, you seize the opportunity to accuse me of—"

"I did not know you were nervous and out of spirits, my love.—Will you take another glass of sherry?"—

"Thank you!—in order that you may tell me, by-and-by, that my headache proceeds from too much wine!"—

"What *is* the matter with you, my dear?—I see you are determined I shall inquire."

"On the contrary, I feel that you might spare me the inquiry.—Poor dear Lady Greville!"—

"Has she met with any accident on the road?"—

"I trust in Heaven, not!—No! I only meant that she must have reached Dovor by this time."

"So much the better for her,—and so much the better for us."—

"For *us?*—What *can* you mean, Mr. Mas-

singberd?—My nearest neighbour,—the only woman of my own condition of life I have to speak to, from one year's end to the other!"

"I congratulate you, my dear. I was not aware that you ranked me at an Earldom. Of whatever condition of life, however,—as Lady Greville and yourself seldom speak to each other above once a fortnight, and then usually to say disagreeable truths to each other,—I cannot suppose that her society is any material loss."

"Whose fault is it, pray, that we do not meet oftener?—When have I ever the free use of the horses?"—

"As Lady Greville has always a stable-full at her disposal—"

"Lady Greville is too nice a judge of etiquette to return my visits oftener than I pay them,"—interrupted Mrs. Massingberd. "However, I appreciate her good intentions towards me.—I know she is aware that I am not my own mistress, or that I should see more of her; and, in spite of your polite hint about the filberts, Mr. Massingberd, I must say I think I have some excuse for being out of spirits after parting with so old a friend."

"*Friend!*"—murmured the squire between his teeth—reflecting upon the three or four dull dinners a-year exchanged between Greville Abbey and Hill Hall, the usual frigid medium of country neighbourship.

"Yes, *friend!*—I wish you could know the handsome things poor dear Lady Greville said of me the other day at the Vicarage, in her farewell visit to Mrs. Graves!"—

"She knew they would be repeated to you before the day was over.—Besides, they say there is nothing on earth so disagreeable that it does not inspire regret when seen for the last time."

"Thank you, Mr. Massingberd!—But without stooping to notice your insult, let me beg you not to advert to such a possibility as my having seen the last of poor dear Lady Greville!"—

"Why, perhaps I am too sanguine. I dare say we shall have her back next year."

"You are really shameful!—What in the world has she ever done to offend or annoy you?"

"*Me?*—nothing!—Except occasionally eating her venison, and giving her my mutton in return, I have little or no intercourse, thank

God, with the lady of your own condition of life, whose departure from England has given you a nervous headache."

"Then why speak so unkindly?"—

"I had no wish to talk about her—you *would* make me. And if I *must* give my opinion, it is that we have no loss in the Countess,—that she is a cold-hearted, narrow-minded woman,—that she cares no more for *us* than I for her,—which does not much signify,—and that she is making a spoony of that fine young man her son, which *does!*"—

"What do you mean to say next!" cried Mrs. Massingberd. "The most exemplary mother in England!—Left a widow at six-and-twenty—and single all these years for the sake of her only son!"—

"What temptation had she to do otherwise? I remember everybody wondered when the late Lord Greville married her,—a poor yea-nay creature, without beauty or accomplishment!—She has learned to say yes and no since, with a vengeance, but she is grown neither wiser nor more attractive."

"I am well aware that you consider all women fools. Men quite as sensible as yourself, however, have pronounced Lady Greville to be a very superior woman."

"Ay, ay!—old Graves, and Anodyne, the apothecary!"—

"No, Mr. Massingberd;—Lord Brooks and Sir Thomas Hardy."

"Ay, ay!—electioneering interests,—conservative combination!—No matter, she has taken herself off, and taken her son off, and I don't know why we waste our time in talking about either of them."

"I am not aware that we have anything more interesting to discuss—that is, more interesting to *me!*"—resumed Mrs. Massingberd, with another doleful sigh. "Poor dear Lady Greville's impaired health——"

"Fiddlesticks, health!"—interrupted the squire, growing really out of humour. "There is no more the matter with the woman than with one of my cart-horses;—Anodyne as good as told me so. But she always hated the Abbey, she always hated the neighbourhood. She only

resided here in compliance with her husband's will; and because she was better able to keep that poor lad under her thumb in this secluded place, than if she had given him free range in town. And now you'll see the end of it. He'll escape her at last. The boy knows nothing of the world. He'll be pigeoned and duped on all sides. In Italy he'll be ruined by picture-dealers;—in France, by opera-dancers.—He'll play;—he'll——"

"You really speak as if you were pleased at the idea!"—cried Mrs. Massingberd, preparing, in majestic ire, to repair to the drawing-room.

"No, I don't!"—rejoined the squire, for once rising to follow her without staying for the refreshment of his usual doze. "I'm heartily sorry for it. The lad, as he came from the hands of his Maker, is as fine a youth as ever I saw. But he has been so trained and documented, so restricted and decorumized, that I wouldn't give a rush for him!—My boy Fred, with half his understanding and a quarter of his information, is worth a dozen Lord Grevilles!"—

"I am very glad you think so, Mr. Massing-

berd. I hope you may continue of the same opinion when your Christmas bills come in. When I see Frederick Massingberd exhibit the same respect for *his* parents that I see the young Earl testify towards poor dear Lady Greville——"

"Pho, pho!—Greville is so deucedly in awe of his mother, that he daren't say his soul's his own. And if you expect a spirited young fellow like Fred to shew any such contemptible subserviency——"

"Indeed I do *not*!—You have trained him in a very different school."

"I hope so. Between me and my son, all is frank and above board. He knows with whom he has to deal, and what he has to expect. Whereas the noble widow, the excellent mother, the woman of your own condition of life yonder at the Abbey, never opened her heart to *her* son in her whole life,—if, indeed, she *have* a heart to open,—which I doubt. Her gentleness is cold-bloodedness,—her mildness, mere hypocrisy. 'The stillest streams'—the proverb's somewhat musty."—

"Musty indeed!"—sneered Mrs. Massingberd, unconscious of the quotation. "But I am sorry to have put you into a passion.—I did not intend to excite you in this way.—Perhaps we had better drop the subject.—I daresay the evening papers are arrived."—And she rang the drawing-room bell with an air of magnanimity; pleased to have extorted from her usually taciturn mate at least thrice the portion of conversation with which he was in the habit of enlivening their conjugal *tête-à-têtes*.

CHAPTER II.

La Comtesse avait réussi au delà de ses espérances. En retour d'un dévouement dont la gravité fortifiait la tendresse, elle avait obtenu de son élève une soumission sans bornes, un respect digne des temps antiques.

L'Arbre de Science.

The young Earl of Greville, the object of so much solicitude on the part of his mother and of discussion in the dining-room at Hill Hall, possessed considerable personal endowments, in addition to those of wealth and aristocratic inheritance.

Above the common height, his figure was well shaped and proportioned. His complexion was fair,—almost too fair for a man; particularly as the slightest excitement of mind, or even em-

barrassment of manner, sent the eloquent blood flushing even to the roots of his somewhat redundant brown hair. But his forehead was expansive and noble, his mouth expressive; and his countenance redeemed from the insipidity commonly attributed to *blondins*, by the dark eyebrows and eyelashes surmounting his full grey eyes. On the whole, he was what is called strikingly handsome;—that is, strikingly handsome for an unmarried earl, with a rent-roll of forty thousand a-year.

Still, Mr. Massingberd was right. His air was deficient, his manners were defective. In direct opposition to the faults and foibles of the age, he was too reserved, too diffident. He had declined addressing his tenants at a dinner previous to his departure for the Continent, at which his health had been "drunk with unbounded applause;" and Lord Brooks, who at present retained the control of his parliamentary interest, felt satisfied that the young Earl would never find courage to support in the Lords the principles advocated by his delegates in the Commons. He might be clever and well in-

formed, but he wanted conversational power,—the ready money so much more available than consols or exchequer bills.

"A sensible youth,—but devoid of all energy or ambition!" was the private hint of Lord Brooks to the minister, who inquired into the nature and politics of the young Earl possessing so large a stake in the country.

"A raw, shy young man, who hates dancing, and blushes when a woman speaks to him!" was the information of Lady Brooks to Lady Hardy; and it was the invitation despatched to Lord Greville, in consequence of this intelligence, to join a party at Sir Thomas Hardy's, to shoot his pheasants and be shot at by his daughters, that eventually accelerated the departure of the Countess from Greville Abbey.

It was, in fact, impossible to be more resolutely determined than her ladyship to postpone to the latest moment the epoch of her dowagerhood. Her interests and affections were equally engaged in the struggle. For one and twenty years, her son had engrossed her care and attention; and as Lady Greville was

arrival at a period of life when her care and attention were of little importance to any other human being, any event that tended to discover her from the young Earl was a decree of bankruptcy.

Greville Abbey, too, was a place of her own creation. Totally neglected during the reign of her valetudinarian husband, she had found a desert, and founded a paradise. It was true she had done all this at the expense of other people's taste and her son's money,—without design, without intelligence. But it was something to have done it. She was as proud of the fine gardens which brought all the county to admire them, as she was of the handsome young Earl, for whom she seemed to dread a similar destiny, and, glorying in her supremacy both as mistress of the family seat and mother of the heir, with the short-sightedness of human passion she exiled herself from the spot during the last years of her regality, lest her sway should be prematurely divided.

The affection of Lord Greville for his mother, meanwhile, was of a nature even yet more ex-

clusive. He loved nothing else on earth; or if he loved Greville Abbey, it was as owing its merit to her superintendence. His childhood and youth had been surrounded by the parasites of his mother, by whom he was accustomed to hear her described and addressed as a being of superhuman excellence; and though their neighbour Lady Brooks was a beauty, and their neighbour Lady Hardy one of the finest musicians of the day, Greville had been taught to believe that the Countess was handsomer and more accomplished than either.

It might have touched a warmer heart than that of "poor dear Lady Greville" to see the eagerness with which their expatriation was seconded by her unsuspecting son, from the moment the state of her health was cited as an incentive to the measure. Though a middle-aged countess is rarely included among the singular varieties of freight authorized by the whims and caprices of the Royal Yacht Club, Greville was eager in offering a passage to Naples to his mother; till satisfied, by her repeated assurances, that she preferred trans-

ferring herself thither by land. His next object was to precede and provide for her coming; and if the young Earl were eventually persuaded into leaving his mother at Naples, and proceeding on his projected tour in the East, it was not till he had obtained professional certification that Lady Greville was free from all personal ailment, and that her nervous disorder would be more speedily benefited by being forced into the society of strangers.

Thus enfranchised, young Greville set sail for the Levant. It was the first outbreak of his independence. He was master of himself and his yacht; and dearly as he loved his mother, it was something to feel freed from a frustrating influence. Though Lady Greville's power over his mind had been obtained by ministering to its caprices, he was not sorry to be able to provide for his own.—Those only who have been uniformly subjected to control, can understand the delight of being able so much as to eat one's dinner at one's own time and discretion.—

And now, "the world was all before him where to choose!"—He spent weeks at Athens,—weeks

at Constantinople,—Smyrna,—Damascus; where a cultivated education supplied him with the means of extracting double enjoyment from the scenes of classic story and oriental romance. The impulses of youth and health were fresh upon him.

His tent on shore, his galley on the sea,

enabled him to taste the raptures described by most travellers in the East, from Chateaubriand and Byron down to the *menu fretin* of fashionable ramblers, smitten of late years with a passion for crocodiles and hieroglyphics.

It was not till the spring that Lord Greville returned to Naples. The Countess, who had no wish to entangle him in the mob of English absentees besetting the Chiaja during the winter months, had been unvarying in her entreaties to him to enjoy to the utmost his facilities for surveying countries he was unlikely to revisit; and when, at the close of March, she had the happiness of folding him once more in her arms, it was a genuine impulse of motherly tenderness that caused her to exult in his fine manly appearance,

knit into firmer vigour, and bronzed into manlier grace, by exposure to the hazards of sea and land in tropical climates. For a moment, she felt sincerely proud of her handsome Hugo; for a moment she fancied that it would be a triumphant thing to see him figure at the court of Naples, and in the dull coteries of high-born English among whom she had been dozing away her winter.

"You will find a few pleasant people here," said she. "The English set is somewhat broken up;—most of them are off for Rome, for the ceremonies of the holy week. But there are the old Marquis of Droneham and his two daughters,—the Dowager Lady Dawdle, the Ebsworths, the Macmichaels, and Lady Louisa Clare. We make up our whist every evening."

"So you wrote me word. I was delighted, my dear mother, to find you were passing your time so agreeably."

"The Droneham's talk of spending the summer at Sorrento,—the Ebsworths and Macmichaels are going to Lucca. I have scarcely

made up my mind *which* of the two parties I shall join."

"I thought—I fancied—" hesitated Greville,—"that you intended returning to England?"—

"To Greville Abbey?"—

"To London,—for the season."

"*The season?*"—reiterated the Countess, who had never before heard that cabalistic word escape the lips of her son. "A season in London would destroy at once all the benefit I have derived from my residence abroad!"—

"In that case, to the Abbey at once," frankly resumed her son. "If you remember, you desired me to pledge myself at the tenants' dinner, that our absence should not be prolonged beyond the summer."

"Did I?—At the tenants' dinner?—I don't remember anything of the kind. At all events, it can be of no importance to *them*. Dowdeswell manages everything during our absence with the most impartial regard to their interests; and as you have no tie at present in the House of Lords—"

"True," interrupted Greville, in an absent, careless tone. "I do not see what object there was in making a declaration on the subject. However, as the pledge *was* given—"

"There will be quite sufficient excuse for resuming it, in the state of my health," rejoined the Countess, coolly. "You have no particular attachment to London, or taste for the crowds of heated ball-rooms—"

"None whatever," again and more eagerly interrupted Greville. "But I am just as little inclined to reek away the summer in a southern climate. I have promised Massingberd a month's shooting at the Abbey in September. The interval, I should like to spend in Switzerland or Germany."

"Massingberd?"—repeated Lady Greville, in some surprise.

"Fred Massingberd, whom I met in quarantine at Malta, and to whom I gave a cast hither in my yacht."

"The son, I presume, of those people at Hill Hall?"—

"The son of the Massingberds of Hill Hall.

Old Massingberd, I am told, was a great friend of my father."

"His nearest country neighbour, which in England is a common substitute for friendship," replied Lady Greville, taking up her work as some cover to her surprise and embarrassment.

"Fred came to Naples last autumn with the Cobhams, with whom you are acquainted," resumed her son. "Lady Cobham, I fancy, is one of his sisters?"—

"Yes,—we visit,—I am slightly acquainted with her. The Cobhams are gone to Rome."

"No — they have been waiting here for Fred Massingberd, who has been making excursions in the Mediterranean. I have half promised to join their party when they quit this place, as I fear I shall be too active a *compagnon de voyage* for an invalid like yourself."

"Certainly—you cannot do better"—replied Lady Greville, with apparent unconcern; too experienced in her vocation to exhibit, and consequently call forth, a spirit of resistance; nor was it till she had taken leave of her son for the night, that she addressed herself to deliberate

cogitation upon the evils likely to arise from his sudden intimacy with young Massingberd and his relations.

The family at Hill Hall were people whom she would have disliked, had she not despised them. They were neither subservients nor equals. Old Massingberd had opposed her projects on various occasions of county interest; and his wife, who, till the marriage of her two daughters, was in the habit of spending her season in town, had proved the sort of standing bore which most country neighbours are felt to be by the great ladies of their county, from the moment they set foot in the metropolis;—always wanting to be introduced to somebody out of their sphere, or to obtain an invitation to some party out of their reach; and having nothing to offer in return, but their fussy thanks and humdrum society.

Even in Oxfordshire, she saw as little of them as she could help. They were the sort of respectable people whose family affairs afforded little to excite interest or surprise. She knew they had a son, nearly of Hugo's age; but she

remembered him only as an insignificant young man, of no manner of consequence except to the small estate he was to inherit. The daughters were pretty insipid girls; and it was a relief to her when Julia Massingberd married Sir James Cobham, and Mary, a few months afterwards, a country clergyman; as it abridged the Hill Hall party when they came to dine at the Abbey, and afforded some diversification to Mrs. Massingberd's family narratives, when they victimized each other with morning visits. As to giving her attention to the pretensions of either, or interesting herself in the destinies of those whom she had seen expand from girlhood to womanhood, it was an effort beyond the limit of her profound selfishness.

Lady Greville now began to regret her ignorance and inattention. *What* was this Fred Massingberd,—*who* were these Cobhams,—to whom accident might assign so much influence? The young man might be half a foot shorter than her son, and yet dangerous. The Cobhams?—There was no saying what mischiefs might not be concentrated in the Cobhams!—

Sir James, as well as she could recollect, was a sporting man,—a rider of steeple-chases. He was perhaps a gambler,—perhaps on the turf! Lady Cobham belonged, she was pretty nearly sure, to the class of pretty young married Englishwomen who drive about with a carriage-full of nurses and children covered with lace frills and huge cockades, in whom they invest their vanity rather than in their own silken ringlets and delicate complexions. But she might be mistaken. Instead of one of these gentle nonentities, Lady Cobham *might* be a designing coquette; and though there was no unmarried sister in the case, *who* was to insure her against a young cousin or a pet friend?—The Countess resolved at once upon a violent taste for Mont Blanc and the mer de glace; or, if the German Spas were to be the order of the summer, she had as much right to be ordered to Baden or Töplitz as any member of the Massingberd family. She must not, at such a critical moment, lose sight of the Earl!—

It was some relief to her fears that, on the morrow, she experienced no opposition from

Hugo. Young Greville's heart was yet warm with the joy of his return to the mother from whom he had borne so long a separation. All the little presents collected for her on his travels, were accepted with even more than her usual graciousness. Never had he seen her so affectionate,—so ingratiating.—Never had he felt more strongly her claims upon the time and tenderness of the only son to whom her own had been exclusively devoted. As yet, indeed, he was unconscious that such claims could ever become importunate, for as yet no tie existed to interfere with their exercise; and he accordingly announced to Massingberd that his mother was anxious to join their travelling party, as if affording a considerable addition to its pleasures.

"Your *mother*, my dear fellow?"—exclaimed Fred, as much amazed as if he had been threatened with the company of the lady of Loretto, or her of Hill Hall.—"And what the deuce are we to do with her?"—

"She will have her own carriage and servants," replied Greville, "as the Cobhams

theirs; and you and I can travel in my *dormeuse*."

"Of course;—but think of the *gêne* of the thing!—At Rome, — at Florence, — Milan,— Paris,—everywhere,—we shall be so cursedly hampered with all these petticoats!—Julia we might easily throw over; Cobham is bound to take care of *her*.—But think of beauing about Lady Greville all the way from St. Peter's to St. Paul's!—My dear boy, you don't know what you have undertaken!"—

Greville's cheeks were suffused for a moment. Eton and Oxford had done something towards habituating him to the brazen slang of the day. But it was nearly two years since he left college, and under no circumstance had he heard the name of his mother thus roughly approached. Still, it was difficult to be angry with his cool off-hand friend.

"I perceive you have forgotten my mother, or you would not talk of her as an incumbrance. She is twice as young and handsome as the General's wife to whom I saw you paying such

assiduous court at Valetta," said he, with a smile. "Ask the Cobhams!"—

"I beg your pardon;—I remember her perfectly.—I have a distinct recollection of the cold proprieties of our dinner, two winters ago, at Greville Abbey!"—cried Massingberd. "As to Julia, she was always frightened out of her wits at Lady Greville; and Cobham counts for nothing, as he hates all female society except that of his wife."

"Then I am afraid I must declare off from your party," was Lord Greville's resolute reply. "I have left my mother alone here all the winter to pursue my own diversions; and feel that I owe my summer to her, particularly so long as she remains abroad."

"You mean, in short, to attach yourself to mamma's apron-string for the remainder of your days!"—cried Massingberd, with a provoking laugh. "My dear Grev., I thought there was more bottom in you!—'Tis no fault of yours, of course, that your father's will makes you a blank in creation till five-and-twenty; but I fancied you had too much *nous* not to lengthen your leading-strings so as to make them hang easy."

"My mother has taken care never to render them irksome," replied Greville, frankly; "and I have therefore no excuse for thwarting her in matters of indifference."

"Matters of indifference?"—cried Massingberd, shrugging his shoulders. "Our expedition to Paris, a matter of indifference?—Think of all the glorious fun we had promised ourselves!"—

"And what occasion have we to break our promise?—I mean to amuse myself to the utmost!"—

"Amuse yourself?—with a family party?—under the eyes of its mamma?—Better engage a travelling tutor at once; or dismiss your courier, and hire the sec. of the Society for the Suppression of Vice, to keep our cash book!"—

Lord Greville laughed, for he saw that a laugh was expected. Still, he ventured to persist that it would be impossible to break his engagement with the Countess.

"Not impossible,—only difficult,"—retorted Massingberd. "At Rome, we will turn Lady Greville over to the Cobhams, and go forward

to secure accommodation for the party. Let us all start fair together, and leave the rest to me."

Fred Massingberd had, in fact, determined that a considerable portion of Lord Greville's arrangements should for the future be left to him. Idle, expensive, and dissolute, he taxed his father's resources to the utmost for the entertainment of his pleasant vices. The old gentleman was indulgent, weakly indulgent, to the excesses of the only son in whom his soul delighted. But an income of three thousand a year, hampered to pay off his daughters' fortunes and keep up his county respectability, could not afford a sufficiently liberal allowance for a young gentleman of Frederick's pretensions. Young Massingberd was fond of hunting, shooting, and yachting, hazard, champagne, and the opera; had his corner at Crockford's and in the omnibus, his name in the books of Cooke and Inkson, Adams and Forsyth. This was perhaps "pushing the duke" too far for the son of an Oxfordshire squire; and it naturally followed that he became shabby,

as a penalty for having pretended to be too fine.

In accepting his brother-in-law's proposal to spend the winter with them at Naples, he had been actuated rather by anxiety to keep out of the way of his Christmas bills and his father's indignation, than by any desire to visit the fine scenery of Italy. Cobham he considered a bore, except at his hunting box in Leicestershire, with a good stable at his disposal;—Julia, everywhere;—and when, at the close of an expedition to Malta, planned to get rid of his *ennui* in their society, he stumbled upon his country neighbour and Oxford chum, Lord Greville, the wandering roué saluted him as sent by the express hand of fortune to his relief.

There was much in the deportment of Massingberd to win the fancy of a very young and very reserved man. Fred was a man of ten years' knowledge of the world,—Fred had been a man from the day he set foot in Eton. He was now almost an old man, or, at least, an old dandy;—hard, insolent, jovial, and, of course, "the best fellow in the world."

He was good looking, too, though described by Lady Greville as insignificant. Deficiency of stature was atoned by exquisite finish in his toilet and deportment. He was one of those whom ladies love to look on,—that is, very young ladies or very old ones, — lounging in the corner of a well turned-out cabriolet, or leaning superciliously against the door of a crowded ball-room.

Such was the worst of Fred Massingberd. The best was, that he was livelier than the average of nothings of the same class,—evermore floating on the surface of London society.

CHAPTER III.

Il n'est pas connoissable depuis qu'il me hante, ce peti homme. Il est vrai que je n'ai pas mon pareil pour débourgeoiser un enfant de famille !

REGNARD.

BETWEEN a positive old woman and a positive young man, the match is pretty nearly equal. Lady Greville was determined to take her departure from Naples in company with her son; Fred Massingberd no less so that Lord Greville should not reach Milan in company with his mother. Both succeeded in their projects.

The English, though by nature less gregarious than other nations, are apt to become sociable on the highway. If fond of staying at home in

solitude, they delight to travel in parties; and the Cobhams were accordingly enchanted with the idea of having the Countess of Greville and her son superadded to their caravan. It looked well in the road-books; it would sound well at Cobham Park and Hill Hall; to say nothing of the charming difficulties of having twelve pair of post-horses in request, and the certainty of sleeping in their carriages for want of beds, at more than one country inn on the road.

Sir James and Lady Cobham, indeed, being people of fortune, made their tour as uncomfortable as people in independent circumstances have a right to do. Sir James was accompanied by an English butler, who "valeted" his master, and twice every day aggravated his discontents with hints of the impositions of the "rascal of a currier," and grumbling against the privations of foreign diet; while his lady was equally happy in the feuds and miseries of two English nurses and a lady's-maid. Wherever they stopped for the night, squabbles and miscomprehensions set the whole establishment in an uproar; and it was no great

stretch of candour on the part of Fred Massingberd to admit, before they quitted Rome, that the mild, well-bred Countess was a pleasanter travelling companion, than the pretty silly Julia, whose maternal solicitudes were always in paroxysms; or the sulky Baronet, who, fancying himself ill-used whenever his wife was not ready to give him her exclusive attention, was incessantly quarrelling with her out of pure conjugal affection.

"By Jove, what nuisances they all are!"—cried Massingberd, seizing Greville's arm, as they sallied forth together, after one of those vain attempts to organize a party to the opera at Bologna, which characterize the insensibility of the English to dramatic entertainments. "Unless they are able to do exactly what they like in precisely their own way of doing it, they would rather sit at home grumbling at each other by way of *passe temps*. My dear fellow, this will never do! For the love of mercy, make up your mind, or let me make it up for you, to be off for Paris to-morrow. Leave me to make our story good to Lady Greville, and I answer for her approval."

And the approval of the Countess was given with so much plausible acquiescence in Massingberd's arguments, that even he, the worldly wise, little suspected she was growing anxious touching Sir James Cobham's discovery that Lord Greville was too young and too handsome, and his wife too young and too pretty, to render their nearer intimacy either safe or desirable.

Two days afterwards, the young men were *en route* for Florence; and though Greville had stoutly denied to his companion that his mother's presence was ever the slightest restraint upon him, he was forced to admit, even to Fred, even to himself, that he *now* more fully appreciated the delights of an Italian tour. They visited Venice; and uttered the usual *niaiseries*, concerning Byron, the Bridge of Sighs, Desdemona, and the Bravos I. and II. of Monk Lewis and Cooper. They spent a happy week among the gay coteries of Milan; gossiped away their evenings at the Scala, and gossiped away their mornings talking of the preceding evenings They loitered at Como;—they lingered here, and idled there;—and, while swearing to each

other fifty times a-day that nothing could exceed the beauties of Italy, animate and inanimate, found themselves gradually attracted across the frontier of the enchanting, though frightful country, which, as Stendhal hath it, "calls itself *la belle France.*" On a warm evening early in May, the travellers found themselves yawning in each other's faces over an indifferent dinner, in a small inn in the little town of Dole.

"After all, they make a better *fricandeau* anywhere than in the mother country!" cried Fred, pushing aside a plateful of dry threads which he had accepted under the designation of that ubiquitous *plat.* "For Heaven's sake, my dear Grev., let this be our last stage to Paris. The weather is delicious,—your carriage twenty times easier to sleep in than the stuffy bed-room of a way-side inn. Two nights more, and we shall be comfortably lodged at the Bristol!"—

"I hate travelling all night when there is no occasion for it," replied Greville, who was beginning to discover that the selfishness of his particular friend was a more irksome burthen than the discreet authority of his mother.

"But there *is* occasion for it, with such a world of enjoyment before us!" cried Massingberd,—and he forthwith began reciting aloud from a copy of the Journal des Débats that lay on the table, a rhapsody of Jules Janin upon the merits of the new ballet.

"We may see it on Monday instead of Friday, I suppose, and survive the postponement," replied Greville, carelessly.

"By Heavens!—I do believe it is that cursed old brown Noah's-ark of a travelling carriage that tempts you to dawdle thus on the road!" cried Massingberd, in a rage. "I saw you looking down upon it, from the last côte we ascended this evening; and if the old gentleman were half as clear-sighted as myself, or his daughters half as ——"

"Hush—hush!"—interrupted Lord Greville, with anxious impatience,—"they are lodged in the very next room."

"The devil they are!—I couldn't understand what you and Giacchimo were whispering about so mysteriously, before dinner. Impart, my dear fellow, impart!—or expect nothing from my con-

federacy. What have you discovered?—Who are they?—Whither bound?—Milanese shopkeepers, eh?—or Russian princesses?—or—"

"Let me once more entreat you to moderate your voice," said Greville, in a tone of repressed indignation;—"the partition is thin—"

"And you are afraid that the interesting young man in the white *paletot* will stand accountant for my noise and my nonsense!—Not a bit!—I have taken care, every time we met, since we crossed the frontier, that they should have an opportunity of becoming acquainted with my voice and character, as well as with your personal merits. *You* have stared, *I* have talked them out of countenance. On more occasions than one I—"

"You will talk me out of patience, if you persist in making such an infernal noise!"—interrupted Greville, perceiving that his companion's volubility increased in proportion as the bottle of Verzenay by his side gradually diminished; and he felt that the calm, well-bred Countess of Greville would have been at that moment a more agreeable associate for his travels, than even the wittiest of *roués*.

"Be candid, and *I* will be quiet!"—continued Massingberd, in his former elevated key. "Tell me half you know, and you may command my whole discretion!—What is their courier's story about them?—and what is yours?"—

"Story! God bless you, I have none to tell, Sir,"

replied Greville, finding it safer to humour than to oppose him. "Giacchimo has discovered no more than we already knew;—namely, that our charming neighbours are French."

"Indeed, I knew no such thing!"—

"You might have made the discovery by the same means you are taking to apprize them that *we* are English—and brutes into the bargain! I overheard the old gentleman giving his orders to the postilions in French that was not to be mistaken for any other than Parisian."

"Bah!—as if *you*—an Etonian, and never having set foot in Paris,—knew a word about the matter!—I dare say the old fellow's *u* was as broad Italian as that of the most legitimate gobbler of maccaroni in the two Sicilies!"—

"As you please;—or as broad as your own assertion, which is as broad as it is long. How-

ever, as I do not intend to persecute my fair neighbours, of whatever nation, with the fumes of my cigar in addition to the noise of my companion, I shall hasten to enjoy my siesta in my own room."

"That is, you are going to lounge on the Place, in the hopes of a glimpse into their apartment," cried Massingberd, who was beginning to clip his words under the influence of champagne. "How the deuce, pray, are the fumes of your cigar to penetrate a wooden partition, sans crack or flaw, or door condemned or condemnable?—Go, and be ———, I spare you the participle, in deference to the ears of your lovely neighbours,—whether Parisian or Otaheitan.—Meanwhile, I bet you the first nap I ever had in my purse (and here it is) that I obtain more information concerning our fellow-travellers without budging from table, than you and Giacchimo together by your united eloquence, bribery, and corruption."

The bet was a drawn one. As Greville rose to quit the room, somewhat irritated by the noisy pertinacity of his friend, the loud clacking

of what he supposed to be a courier's whip and the galloping of a horse past the windows, which were on the ground-floor overlooking the inn-yard, distracted their attention; and in another minute, the adjoining room emitted evidences of volubility quite as remarkable as those which he had checked in Massingberd.

Loud salutations uttered in a deep masculine voice, and exclamations of "My dear Gustave!" "My charming cousins!" were followed by a series of questions and answers, which clearly proved the travellers to be French, and proceeding to Paris from Italy, where they had been passing the winter for the benefit of the old gentleman, a Marquis, and an invalid;—but whether the "belle Sophie" and "charmante Eugénie" apostrophized by the new comer were the said Marquis's daughters or nieces, remained doubtful. One thing was clearly established; that, whatever might be the condition or politics of the travellers, Gustave was a Carlist colonel, living in retirement on his estate; come by especial appointment for a passing interview with his cousins on their road

to the capital; and that unless he could persuade them to diverge from their route on the morrow to visit his château, Lord Greville and his friend were likely to meet them again and again as they proceeded.

"And what on earth takes you to Paris in such haste at this season of the year?"—demanded the Colonel, on finding slight hopes held out to him of the favour he had been soliciting.

"We have much business to settle, after six months' absence," replied the feeble voice of the Marquis, "previous to repairing to Les Etangs for the summer."

"Where I earnestly hope you will come and visit us," added the silver tones of one of the fair cousins; and the two young men, involuntary auditors of the conversation, could easily conjecture the smiling bow with which such an invitation must be accepted.

"Besides," added the second female voice, "though the carnival and its balls are over, Paris is never pleasanter than during the month of May. It has become the fashion, you know, for the Faubourg to give its fêtes after Easter,

in order to distinguish them from the mobs of the ministerial and diplomatic circles."

"Then there are the charming breakfasts of the ambassadresses!"—added her sister.

"And our delightful drives in the Champs Elysées, and rides in the Bois de Boulogne!"—resumed the other.

"In short," cried the rough voice of the Colonel, "you evidently intend to offer me not only a reasonable excuse for your own expedition to Paris, but strong inducements to visit it myself."

"The coxcomb!"—burst involuntarily from the lips of Lord Greville and Fred Massingberd.

"Ay, do accompany us,—we have a fourth place for you in the carriage!"—added the querulous voice of the old gentleman. And it was no small relief to the listeners to find the invitation declined.

"Impossible, my dear sir!—I have too much on my hands, to say nothing of the dangers inevitable to me from such a journey."

And though Massingberd could suppose the

probability of political perils for the Carlist Colonel, Lord Greville instantly figured to himself the impertinent smile and glance towards one or other of his fair cousins, intending to assign to his speech a more gallant interpretation.

"By Jove, we have no business to sit eaves' dropping here!"—cried he, on observing that Fred Massingberd was still sober enough to take note of his changes of countenance. And finding his friend resolved not to vacate his position, the Earl was careful to cough so loudly as to advertize his neighbours that they were overheard. A confused whispering assured him that his hint was understood. The travellers kept travellers' hours, and soon afterwards retired to rest.

On the morrow, Massingberd slept late, thanks to a severe headache consequent on his bottle of Versenay; and on inquiry, it proved that the party of the Marquis de Rostanges had departed at sunrise.

"Never mind!—we shall be sure to overtake them!"—was the consolation of Massingberd to

his friend. But though pretending great eagerness to forward what he inferred to be Greville's wishes on the subject, the listless dandy contrived not to be ready for a start, till the heat of noontide rendered the road insupportable.

"Never mind!"—was still his cool apostrophe. "These people are doubtless wiser than ourselves; and are pausing at some inn till sunset, to escape the *coup de soleil* with which poor Giacchimo is at this moment in imminent danger."

Greville who, partly by nature partly by education, was an adept in that best of human philosophy, to bear and forbear, refrained from self-vindication; resigning himself to his reveries without so much as noticing that the fumes of Fred Massingberd's cigar were now superadded to the suffocating dust of the road. He knew that "time and tide wear through the darkest day," even when overclouded by the selfishness of a smoking friend; or rather, he knew nothing just then, except that every hour and every stage brought them nearer to Paris; and that the Paris which his companion regarded as a

wilderness, not exactly of monkeys, but of restaurants and theatres, was about to contain the grey-eyed Sophie and dark-haired Eugénie, whose graceful manners and elegant persons had produced so powerful an effect upon his imagination.

He fancied—a handsome young man of two and twenty might be excused for indulging in such fancies, more particularly since he had the discretion to keep them to himself,—that the attention of the fair travellers had been in some slight degree conceded to himself. Both had deigned to exchange a gentle salutation for the profound bow with which he passed them on the dirty staircase of the hotel at Dole. It was true, they could no less; but Greville discerned an indication of more than common civility in the gesture. One thing, however, sorely vexed him. It appeared that the Colonel had eventually accepted the fourth place in the brown Noah's ark, as proposed by the Marquis de Rostanges!—The Colonel (of whom he had been unable to secure a glimpse the preceding night, so as to determine the important question

of his personal advantages,) the Colonel, with all the easy assurance announced by his coarse volubility, was consequently at that moment seated side by side with the black or the grey-eyed cousin, and opposite to the other; while his own social enjoyments were limited to the gentle snore with which Massingberd now superseded the cigar.—Poor Greville!—

The heat of the day at length gave place to one of those calm dewy evenings which, unperceived by the traveller, extend their tranquillizing influence over the landscape, till

All the air a solemn stillness holds.

The twilight of early May, particularly in the south, is the most fragrant and refreshing hour of the twenty-four; and Greville, lost in his own thoughts, and the enjoyment of a rising breeze, began to rejoice that he had acceded to Massingberd's proposal to travel through the night.

The carriage had been tediously ascending a long steep hill, to which the straight direction of the road afforded no relief; when, as they reached

the brow, commanding, had there been daylight to reveal its horizon, an extensive tract of country, Lord Greville's ears were saluted by the sudden and vehement ejaculations of Giacchimo, who had been preceding them on foot.

"*Santissimo Dio!*—what a terrible sight!"—cried he; and the two postilions, startled by his exclamations, as they stopped for him to resume his place in the rumble, soon added a chorus of imprecations to his deep solo.

"What in the devil's name is the matter?" cried Massingberd, starting up, rubbing his eyes, and instantly drowning, with unmeaning oaths, the mild interrogations of Lord Greville.

"A fire—a terrible fire!"—cried Giacchimo, aghast.

"One of our wheels fired?"—exclaimed Massingberd, scarcely yet awake, and incapable of imagining a misfortune in which he had no share.

"No, no!"—replied Lord Greville, who, having hastily alighted, was standing with Giacchimo on the brow of the *côte*. "Below yonder,—in the valley!—By Jove, how the flames are bursting forth!"—

"Some hay-rick,—some hovel!"—cried Massingberd. "For God's sake, my dear fellow, get in again, and let's be off. We have lost ten minutes, while yonder fellows were *sacréing* away their salvation!"—

But Lord Greville was too earnestly engaged in conversation with the postilions even to reply. As far as they could judge, they said, it must be the village of Grangeneuve that was in flames. They knew little of that part of the country; but one of them readily agreed to take off the horses, and ride with Lord Greville to the spot, leaving his companion with the carriage and its luggage, including Massingberd, who declared himself too much indisposed to stir with the view of rendering assistance to "a pack of peasants, who would probably not so much as thank them for their pains."

In another moment, they were galloping along a bye-road leading from the foot of the hill; guided towards the scene of danger rather by the lurid reflection of the conflagration, than by the local knowledge of the hero in jack-boots who had undertaken their pilotage. Every now and then, a fresh outburst of light served to

hasten their speed, by an announcement of the progress of the devouring element; but, as Gros Pierre was careful to announce as intelligibly as the rough gallop of his beast would allow, that Grangeneuve was a detached hamlet in the midst of coppices, and that, as the fire had occurred after the hour of the villagers retiring to rest, the inhabitants were probably already burnt in their beds, there was little to encourage their enterprise.

On reaching Grangeneuve, however, they had the mortification to find the little knot of cabins of which it was composed as fast and dark as if nothing extraordinary were occurring!—Not a soul was stirring; even the dogs scarcely roused themselves to utter a feeble bark as the horses of Lord Greville and his noisy companion clattered along the causeway.

"*Nom de Dieu!* this is worse and worse!—It must be the château!—yet I could have sworn that the château lay a league further in the valley,"—cried Gros Pierre.

"Are we, at least, in the right road?"—exclaimed Lord Greville, on perceiving that the

fierce reflection of the fire upon the sky rather increased than diminished.

"Quite right!—keep to the left after passing the brook, and we shall be on the spot in fifteen minutes,"—cried the postilion. "*Sacristie!* to think that I should never have recollected the château!—On, on! *mon bon M'sieur!*—there may be life and death in the matter!"—

"At least, let us rouse the inmates of the village and obtain their assistance for the sufferers,"—cried Lord Greville. And this prudent suggestion having been attended to, and attended *with* all the tedious explanations consequent upon rousing up at dead at night sleepers oppressed by the labours of the day, Lord Greville hastened onwards in the direction pointed out. He soon needed no other guide than the reddening flames to suggest his way.

Within half-an-hour of quitting the high-road, Lord Greville was foremost in a group of terrified and disheartened servants, who were awkwardly attempting to fix a crazy ladder, procured with difficulty from a neighbouring grange, to the upper story of a large, rambling country

mansion, scarcely deserving the name of château, so closely was it incorporated with a farm-house, already more than half destroyed by the fire which had originated under its roof, and which threatened destruction to the whole edifice.

"I tell you 'tis useless!"—cried one of the assistants to the new comers, "the flooring *must* have fallen in by this time.—If there had been any hope of saving the poor old gentleman, do you think my master the Colonel would not have been the first to propose attempting the window?"—

"Colonel d'Aramon is desperately hurt himself," added another; "his clothes were scorched nearly off his back as he rushed a second time through the flames with one of the ladies in his arms."

But the startling intelligence thus conveyed was lost upon Lord Greville. Having reached the scene of action fresh and excited, while the rest of the assistants were overpowered, and in some instances injured, by previous exertion, he did not hesitate to rush up the ladder, now

firmly planted by the aid of Gros Pierre and the stragglers reaching the spot from Grangeneuve, towards the window pointed out by the crowd as affording the only chance of escape for some individual sleeping within. To crash the window-frame, fortunately unprotected by shutters, and burst into the room, was the work of a moment; and though the shouts accompanying the heroic ascent of the young stranger were a moment suspended by anxiety as he disappeared from their eyes, it was some relief to the panic of the moment that no flames burst forth from the broken window to announce that the expectations of the spectators were realized, and that the fire was raging in the upper story.

Still, moments elapsed, even minutes, and those prolonged by the intense anxiety of the still increasing throng;—but the stranger who had so unaccountably dropped from the clouds to hazard his life for the sake of persons unknown, re-appeared not!—

"He is lost!—he is suffocated by the smoke!"—cried Gros Pierre and his companions.—"God have mercy upon his soul!"—

"*Who* is lost,—*who* is suffocated?"—exclaimed the authoritative voice of a gentleman, who now rushed breathless upon the terrace whereon the ladder had been fixed.

"A stranger,—a brave young foreign traveller, who hurried hither from the high-road on discovering the fire,"—replied one of the servants.

"Bah!—you are dreaming!"—cried the breathless gentleman, almost beside himself with agitation and alarm.

"It is not five minutes since he mounted the ladder and entered the old Marquis's bedroom!"—interposed a stable-boy, "as Gros Pierre here, who brought the gentleman and other succours with him from Grangeneuve, can attest."

"Ay! and I heartily wish we had all tarried behind,"—growled the postilion; "for I have been the means of making an untimely end of as noble a gentleman as ever backed a horse; and small thanks to him, it seems, for his generous spirit! But by the Blessed Lady and all her Saints he shan't die like a dog, while we

stand wondering at his folly!—If help may yet avail—"

And the postilion began disencumbering himself of his jack-boots, with the intention of ascending the ladder in his turn and penetrating into the interior of the fatal apartment; when, with an angry oath, the Colonel commanded him to desist.

"If he ever entered the room, as you assert, he left it safely by the door, and descended the stone staircase, which the fire has not yet reached, and down which I conducted the Marquis de Rostanges ten minutes ago!"—cried he. "All the fellow has done is the mischief of letting in a current of air through yonder broken windows.—But why do we stand talking here, while the flames are making their cursed way to the farm?—Follow me, friends! By tearing down an outhouse or two, we may still save the granaries of poor Caudebec!"

Thus satisfied of the safety of the intrepid stranger, the villagers, shouting and excited, followed the agitated proprietor of the blazing pile towards the farm-yard, which presented a

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traveller, safe and sound, though somewhat blackened and disfigured by his transit through the château.

"Praise be to God!—I thought the Colonel was making a fool of me!"—cried Gros Pierre, seizing Greville heartily by the hand, and giving it a cordial shake. "You are one of the right stuff, whoever you are, and I knew as much the moment I saw you in your saddle. You ride like a man,—and you behave like a man, which is more than one can say of all gentlemen, with the Colonel yonder at the head of 'em.—To think that I should have lent a hand to sending you on a fool's errand up this cursed crazy old ladder, where you hazarded breaking your neck, without the possibility of being of use to any mortal breathing!"—

"The people seem bewildered by so much confusion,—so much danger,"—replied Greville. "The Marquis de Rostanges was in safety, I find, before I entered his room.—No matter! We are none of us the worse for the attempt; and every inhabitant of the farm and château is happily forthcoming."

"Ay, ay!—no further danger except for the granaries!"—cried Gros Pierrre. "If you're not tired of serving those who have not even the grace to thank you, *mon bon M'sieur*, come round with me into the *basse cour*, and—"

"Can you direct me to find the chapel?"—inquired Greville in his turn.

"The chapel!"—reiterated Gros Pierre. "Is there a chapel attached to the Château de Grangeneuve?"—

And on finding how little he had to hope of information from the postilion, Lord Greville, leaving the granaries and the pigeon-house to their fate, pushed his way through a quincunx of sycamores from which he had seen the Colonel emerge previous to their hurried encounter a few minutes before; and was not long in finding his way to a barn-like edifice surmounted by a cross standing at a few hundred yards from the extremity of the terrace, the door of which was ajar.

A sound of lamentation greeted him in the porch; kneeling on the threshold of which were two or three peasant-girls attached to the service

of the chateau, whose loud prayers and louder outcries rendered almost inaudible the reiterated inquiries of the young Earl after the Marquis de Rostanges and his family. The flames were now so far abated, that the uncertain light glimmering through the narrow windows of the chapel rendered it difficult to ascertain the exact number or nature of its inmates; nor was it till after repeated demands, that he could obtain the attention of the terrified damsels nearest the door so far as to learn that "*ces dames*" were in prayer at the foot of the altar.

Anxiously but timidly penetrating into the interior of the little chapel, Lord Greville had the satisfaction to perceive the old gentleman leaning on the shoulder of one of his lovely companions, while the other knelt weeping by their side.

Scarcely half-a-dozen words passed between the parties;—but of a nature to satisfy Lord Greville's mind that they were safe,—unhurt;—that they were aware of the risk he had undergone for their sake;—and that he was accepted as a friend for life!—

CHAPTER IV.

Tour à tour, insoueiante comme un enfant et pensive comme une femme, étourdie le matin et le soir mélancolique, pétulante jusqu'à la folie ou sérieuse jusqu'à la gravité, docile à la tempête mais reflétant l'instant après la serenité du ciel, elle offrait un de ces types ondoyans et complexes, devant lesquels les bourgeois s'arrêtent avec défiance, et les artistes avec amour.

BERNARD.

"My dear fellow, what would you have?—I remained there starving on the crown of the causeway till nearly two o'clock in the morning!"—cried Fred Massingberd, in answer to the remonstrance of Greville. "We then saw that the flames had subsided, and that all danger was past. The postilion was beginning to grumble, (though Giacchimo promised him a

handsome *pourboire.*) And the end of it was, that I recollected you would be sure to make your way here to the post station, instead of expecting to find us star-gazing on the road till you saw fit to return from your mad expedition. So we stopped the first pair of return-horses,—*et me voilà.*"—

"I certainly did not expect to find you quietly in bed, while uncertain whether we were dead or alive!"—cried Greville. "And if I hoped to find the carriage where I left it, 'twas because it is wanted for the immediate conveyance hither of Madame de Rostanges and her sister."

"Madame de *whom?*"—

"Madame la Marquise de Rostanges, her husband, and sister,—the inmates of the château which was all but consumed last night,"—replied the Earl.

"A Marquise?—a château?—And so you have actually been making a *héros de roman* of yourself while I was smoking my cigar unsuspectingly by the road-side!"—cried Massingberd, at length startled from his pillow. "'Pon

my soul, Grev., this was stealing a march upon me with a vengeance !"

"You did not choose to bear me company—"

"You did not choose to tell me the real object of your enterprise !"—

"I suppose it will be useless to say or swear, to a pagan like yourself, that when I left you I had not the remotest suspicion whither, or to whose relief, I was hastening. One of those strange freaks of fate which sometimes occur out of the pages of a romance, enabled me to be of service to persons in whom I feel, I admit, an unaccountable interest."

"As if you had not bribed the mayor of the village, or some other notable of the place, to play Guy Fawkes with the old château,—that you might do a little bit of romantic by extinguishing the flames with the gardener's watering pot !"—cried Massingberd, shuffling on his dressing-gown, as he rose hastily from bed.

"I have no time to brag of my exploits just now," cried Greville, good-humouredly. "I disturbed you only to say that the carriage is at the door to proceed to Grangeneuve, for the

use of the Marquis de Rostanges's family; the brown Noah's-ark having been too much injured by the fire to be of further use."

"And what the deuce, then, is to become of them and *us*?"—cried Massingberd, with an air of consternation.

"As soon as they have recovered their fatigue and alarm, they will resume their journey?"

"To Paris?—in our carriage?"—

"To Paris,—in my carriage. *We* can easily find places in the first diligence," replied the Earl.

"Easily enough—but not easy places."—

"Do you think such accommodation better suited, then, to Madame de Rostanges and her sister?"—

"What are Madame de Rostanges and her sister to *me*?—I never beheld them till four days ago, and don't care if I never see them again!—The diligence!—pah!—What a nuisance women are, from the moment they set their feet out of their own houses!"—muttered the dandy.

"I can't stay to fight the battles of the sex

just now," cried Greville; "but I have no doubt Madame de Rostanges and the dark-eyed Eugénie will add their thanks to mine, if you bestir yourself to have an excellent breakfast ready for us on our arrival."

And he was off before Massingberd had time to acquiesce or remonstrate.

The morrow of a midnight fire necessarily presents a scene of desolation; whether its ravages have swept through the palace or the cottage,—whether the interests of the arts or the sober realities of humble life are sacrificed by the catastrophe. At Grangeneuve, though the lamentations of every village within many leagues round were in request to bewail the calamity of Farmer Caudebec and the brave Colonel d'Aramon, there was less cause for despair than on most similar occasions. No loss of life or limb,—not so much as a horse or cow sacrificed;—and the property so far insured as to preserve the poor Caudebec from the ruin usually consequent for the poor on such a misfortune.

Still, nothing could exceed the wretchedness

of the houseless family, or the desolation of the spot. The terrace of the château, with its pretty adjoining flower-gardens, was strewed with wrecks of the farmer's humble household furniture, which had been removed thither as to a place of security. Even the façade of the château, with its broken windows, and the eastern wing connecting it with the farm, scorched and defaced by the flames, looked sufficiently disconsolate, Lord Greville could scarcely refrain from a smile at the pompous care with which Colonel d'Aramon exclusively pointed out, as they visited the spot together, the dreadful havoc *his* property had undergone.

"But yesterday, Sir, the Château de Grangeneuve was one of the prettiest things in the whole Canton," said he. "You see it in miserable disorder;—the vases overthrown from their pedestals,—the parterres trampled down,—and my poor terrace disgraced by all this trumpery!—Yet, I again assure you, Sir, that yesterday, when my charming cousins drove into the court-yard, Mademoiselle de Nangis admitted she had seen

nothing more enchanting in her travels than the site of the Château de Grangeneuve !"

Lord Greville replied only by a polite bow ; secretly of opinion that either Mademoiselle de Nangis's better judgment was blinded by family prejudices, or that her understanding must be strangely at variance with her intellectual cast of countenance.

"I have vainly attempted, Sir, to persuade the Marquis to defer his departure till to-morrow," resumed the Colonel. "The château, Heaven be thanked, has escaped without material injury ;—and I could still establish them so comfortably that it would be far wiser not to attempt the journey till recovered from the fatigues of last night. However, they will not be persuaded ;—they are too scrupulous. They are apprehensive, Sir, of adding to my anxieties at such a crisis ;—and I am reluctantly compelled to submit to their decree."

To Greville's great relief, Colonel d'Aramon now escorted him into a saloon, whose uncarpeted brick-floor and worm-eaten furniture of faded tapestry, appeared to English

eyes very little superior to the household goods of the poor farmer which encumbered the terrace. The Colonel, however, evidently thought otherwise—

> Stately stepped he east the ha'
> And stately stepped he west,

while expressing his regrets that untoward circumstances should prevent his welcoming an English visitor with becoming honours;—pointing out to the stranger with a pompous wave of the hand the fine prospect visible from the uncurtained windows, as he proceeded to marshal him into a small chamber occupying one of the turrets flanking the château, in which, in anxious expectation of his arrival, sat Madame de Rostanges, her husband, and sister. They made no secret of their joy on seeing him again.

"I was afraid you might be tempted to desert us!"—cried Mademoiselle de Nangis; a deep blush succeeding to the paleness and languor produced by the terrors of the preceding night; while Madame de Rostanges, acknowledging

Lord Greville's salutations by a gentle smile, turned towards the Marquis with a whispered ejaculation of—"I told you so!—There was nothing to fear!—I was certain he would keep his promise!"—

"My carriage awaits your orders in the court-yard," said he, abruptly addressing Monsieur de Rostanges; "accompanied by a *cabriolet de poste* for the use of your servants. Everything is prepared for your reception at the inn. Surely you cannot too speedily enable these ladies to enjoy the rest and refreshment of which they stand so much in need?"—

Still bewildered by the dreadful event which had placed him in fear, if not in peril of his life, Monsieur de Rostanges, a gentlemanly valetudinarian, about sixty years of age, was evidently puzzled between the civilities due to the kinsman to whom their visit had proved so signal a misfortune; and those owing to the distinguished young foreigner who, as the lady's-maid had been just declaring to Mademoiselle de Nangis, "*se mettait en quatre pour leur rendre service.*" He became confused in his apologies

to the Colonel, for having been the means of burning down his house, (the *fermière* having dinned into the ears of the family that the fire arose from the over-heating of her ovens in baking *pains de gruau* for the guests;) and to the Milor, for being the means of turning him out of his carriage, (Giacchimo, who was reluctantly in attendance, having pointed out that his lordship was on horseback, to avoid being an incumbrance to the party.) Nor was it till Eugénie de Nangis, who sometimes assumed the privileges of girlhood with her grave brother-in-law, took the liberty of reminding him that they were increasing the embarrassment of all parties by so much ceremony, that he could be prevailed upon to make his final bow.

Nothing could be more amusing than the air of magnanimity with which Monsieur de Rostanges lifted his hat in acknowledgment of the cheers raised by the poor Caudebecs and their people, as the handsome English travelling carriage was jolted over the wretched pavement out of the court-yard. Little did he suspect

that the compliment was an effort of gratitude towards Greville, whose liberalities had been promptly and nobly dispensed to the sufferers from the fire. The Marquis had done nothing; they were not "his people." It was no affair of his. He had fulfilled his duty by dropping an offering into the poor's box of the chapel;—not so much as an aid to the needy of this world, as to testify his gratitude to Heaven for his own preservation from destruction.

If the prolixity of Monsieur de Rostanges proved an annoyance to poor Colonel d'Aramon, who was beginning to find that the honour of affording a night's hospitality to two pretty cousins might be dearly purchased, to Fred Massingberd the evil was of a still more crying nature;—for the time passed on, and no travellers appeared. The excellent breakfast that was spoiling,—the over-boiled coffee,—the over-stewed *matelotte*,—the forgotten cutlets,—the cold brioche!—It was too provoking that the quiet, reserved Greville, hitherto so positive in his views of human enjoyment, should

have chosen the moment of their journey to develope his capabilities as a hero of romance!—

"From the moment I set eyes on that cursed old brown Noah's ark, I foresaw mischief!" muttered Frederick, as he stood watching from the window of the Golden Lion the coming of Greville's carriage along the dusty high-road; as eagerly as in the month of September, in London, he would have watched from Crockford's window the transit of the only stray carriage extant in the metropolis. "After having got rid of all those bores of women at Rome, to run one's head into such a viper's nest as this! A Frenchwoman out of Paris is the devil; and two of them, (and a soubrette, neither young nor pretty, for that portion of the Noah's ark fell under my especial cognizance,) to drive one out of one's wits, and into the *Messageries Royales!* —By Jove, Greville is old enough to know better!—His mother is right—he is not fit to be trusted out of her sight.—How could I be such an ass as to let him gallop off on that fool's errand last night.—What the deuce had

an English peer to do at a village fire in Burgundy?—*Que diable allait-il faire dans cette galère!*"—

Poor Frederick had only one resource for his ill-humour,—the English dandy's universal stronghold of defence:—he would be *fine!* When these troublesome foreigners arrived, they should obtain no advantage over *him*. He would make it so apparent how greatly he and his travelling companion were inconvenienced on their account, that they must be compelled to decline the accommodation offered.

Nevertheless, when the party eventually made its appearance, even the cool, self-possessed Fred Massingberd found it impossible to persevere in his intentions. Not only the overstrained obsequiousness of the host of the Golden Lion, overjoyed at having such unlooked-for victims to prey upon as a party of travellers, including a cheatable English Milor and a cheating Italian courier, but the high-bred courtesy of the Marquis, rendered any attempt at ungraciousness impossible. Neither the gentle smiles of Madame de Rostanges, nor the piquant glances

of her sister, would have disarmed his dandyism. But the graceful bow of the gentleman of the old school overpowered the insolence even of St. James's Street.

Nor were his attempts at exquisitism less completely frustrated. Having resolved, since he must not mark his contempt of the intruders, to shew his consciousness of superiority by sneering at the miserable accommodations of the Golden Lion, and turning to a jest the heroism of Greville and the bloodless perils of the preceding night, his wit fell pointless; for the fair Parisians were deeply and piously grateful for their escape from dangers which they still shudderingly declared to have been imminent; and their earnest declarations of obligation to their new friend were uttered in a tone that admitted of no flippant rejoinder.

"Poor Grev.!—They have found him out!—He is a marked man!—Giacchimo has been chattering, and it is all over with Greville Abbey!"—was Massingberd's secret monologue. "Already they perceive how soft he is, and have booked him for a victim. Which wins the

day,—black eyes or blue?—the married beauty or the single?—By Jove, I shall be curious to see how matters turn out!"

But, like other individuals overripened by the precocitatiousness of the age, Fred Massingberd was too shrewd by half. So far from having found out Lord Greville, that is, found him out as a man enjoying high advantages of birth and fortune, Madame de Rostanges having encountered in her Italian tour certain young English lordlings of a very different tone of conduct and character, had taken it into her head that Greville was the travelling-companion or poor relation of the dandified Fred; while as to Eugénie, she was so overpowered by the *attaques de nerfs* she had experienced the preceding night, that all the houses of peers of all Europe might have been present, without exciting much attention. She had scarcely found time even to notice with disgust the hard stare with which she was honoured by the young gentleman who discussed so learnedly the seasoning of cutlets and saucing of matelottes, before she begged permission to retire with her sister for

the repose and quiet of which they stood so much in need.

When, late in the day, Madame la Marquise and the lovely Eugénie emerged from their chamber, refreshed in spirit, to tender to their English friends the acknowledgments in which they felt themselves to have been previously deficient, Lord Greville and Massingberd were gone; and the travelling carriage of the Earl was at the door, packed and prepared for the continuance of their journey.

"*Ces Messieurs* would not hear of your being disturbed to receive their adieux," said the Marquis, in reply to Eugénie's eager interrogations. "They had an opportunity of engaging the coupé when the diligence stopped to change horses, which was not to be neglected. D'Aramon, who was here at the time, (having ridden over an hour ago to see that we were properly attended to, and obtain the attendance of the Sous Préfet to preside over the *procès verbal* of the fire,) strongly advised them not to lose so eligible an opportunity."

"How very provoking!—how very officious!"

burst at the same moment from the lips of both sisters.

"We had really no opportunity to express our sense of his disinterested kindness!" added Madame de Rostanges. "I am assured by Adèle, who witnessed the scene, that at the moment this young man ascended to the apartment in which you were supposed to lie in imminent danger, not another person could be found to hazard the attempt."

"D'Aramon assures me, however, that the enterprise was quite gratuitous," replied the Marquis, somewhat drily.

"As it proved," hastily interrupted Eugénie de Nangis. "But Colonel d'Aramon was not on the spot,—Colonel d'Aramon saw nothing of the matter!—He was too much occupied with the preservation of his goods and chattels to trouble himself unnecessarily with—"

"Be just, amid all your enthusiasm, my dear Eugénie," interrupted Monsieur de Rostanges, in his turn. "D'Aramon, in spite of his roughness, the best fellow breathing, had seen us all in safety before he gave a moment's thought to the care of his property."

"He was indeed most kind, most considerate; and I shall never cease to regret the consequence of our unlucky acceptance of his hospitality," interposed Madame de Rostanges. "But I should be sorry to find him underrate the services of our English friend."

"No doubt Colonel d'Aramon took occasion to insinuate to Monsieur de Grévile, as well as to yourself, that his attempt at your rescue from the flames last night was a mere act of Quixotism!"—cried Eugénie, impatiently. "Really, *ce cher cousin* has vegetated in his retreat yonder at Grangeneuve till he seems to have lost all sense of the claims of society, or of common politeness."

"He has not lost his sense of the claims of kindred, as his ill-fated hospitality to us avouches," remonstrated the Marquis. "However, I will waste no further time in fighting his battles. All that remains for us is to make the best of our way to Paris; where occasions will not be wanting to testify to the English gentlemen thrown so opportunely in our way at this unlucky juncture, the sense we entertain of their courtesy."

The word "courtesy" grated on the ears of Madame de Rostanges and her sister. Their feelings were still warm, their imaginations still exalted, by the enthusiasm natural to their sex on such occasions as the incident which had brought about their acquaintance with Lord Greville. Had he been a person of ordinary attractions,—had he been even ugly, old, repellent,—they must have been touched by his generous exertions in their behalf. But there was every excuse for the exaggeration of their feelings in the graceful deportment, indicative of refinement and high station, for which Greville was remarkable. They were vexed that he should have quitted them without adieu; vexed that he should have so readily resigned their society for that of the fastidious dandy, to whom they already assigned his real value in comparison with that of his less ostentatious companion.

"He has shaken us off somewhat cavalierly," was Sophie's whispered observation to her sister, as they preceded Monsieur de Rostanges into the carriage which now so commodiously replaced the brown Noah's ark. "*N'importe!*—

in three more days, we shall be at home. It will then depend upon ourselves to testify our gratitude.—It will then depend upon ourselves to ascertain whether we have formed an extravagant estimate of the merits of our new friend."

CHAPTER IV.

Strip a butterfly of its painted wings, and it becomes a grub.

BURTON.

"'*Alle gut, ende gut!*'—as my blackguard used to say at Vienna when he shaved me without inflicting disfigurement on my noble chin!"—cried Fred Massingberd, extending himself at full length on one of the satin sofas of a handsome apartment in the Hotel des Princes, two days after the great event.—"We are not so ill off here as I anticipated; and after all, one could not hope to be received at the Bristol or the Rhin, jolting to the door as we did in a filthy fiacre, with evident signs of having beastlified all

night in one of Laffitte and Caillard's abominable receptacles for wayfaring men."

"I have no doubt they would have given us their best rooms, had they chanced to be unoccupied; and the more readily at the Hotel de Bristol, since my mother and the Cobhams have written to retain apartments," replied Lord Greville.

Massingberd, on receiving this intelligence, looked as if perfectly reconciled to the destiny which had settled them at the Hotel des Princes!

"I have already despatched Giacchimo to order our dinner at Véry's, and to secure stalls at the opera," said he, yawning.

"They spoke of having an excellent table-d'hôte in the house," said Lord Greville, looking at his watch.

"The best in Paris, which ought to be the best in the world," answered his friend.—"But the best table-d'hôte in the world must still be the nastiest thing in nature,—a réchauffée of *plats* and people not acceptable elsewhere. No, no, Grev.,—no table-d'hôtes an' thou lovest me! To-morrow, I will get your name down at the

Union and Jockey Clubs. I should have dined at the Union to-day, had you been a member."

"Let me be no restraint upon you;—I shall be quite satisfied with the nearest café," said Greville, with an air of unconcern.

"Don't talk so like a Hottentot!—Have you no palate, or, at all events, no sense of decency?—I see I must take care of your health and morals, or I shall find you eating dirt (*not* Orientally speaking) at one of the horrible *restaurants à vingt-cinq sous*, where the public is poisoned in cold blood, with extenuating circumstances. But here comes Giacchimo with the bulletin of our pleasures for the evening."

Great was the disappointment of Massingberd on learning that the Italian Opera had been closed for several weeks; the company having performed its annual migration to London. At the French Opera, not a box or stall was to be had!—

"There will be a good box on the second tier the week after next; and next week, perhaps, *des stalles d'orchestre*," was all the consolation afforded by the emissary who accompanied the courier; and Fred, who in London carried

himself at the Opera as if a part-proprietor of the establishment, and who fancied it impossible for Cerito or Taglioni to dance unencouraged by his plaudits, was amazed to find that even the talisman of ready gold would do no more than enable him to cross the threshold of the Académie Royale, with the chance of finding a place in some upper box fifty feet above the level of the stage.

"It is the run of Meyerbeer's new opera," observed the agent. "On such occasions, the house is bespoken for ten or twenty representations; for the first few nights, the *bureau de location* was not even opened."

"This would scarcely be believed in apathetic London," said Greville, smiling at the irritation of his companion. "However, do not let us break our hearts about it, with so many other means of enjoyment within our reach."

"Pray propose that we should go and amuse ourselves at the nearest *spectacle*, as you did that we should feed ourselves at the nearest *restaurant*!"—cried Fred, with an air of profound disgust.

"On the contrary," replied Greville, good-

humouredly, "as you declare yourself to be shaken to pieces by the jolting of the infernal machine miscalled a diligence, I strongly recommend that you spend the evening on the sofa, or at your club, while I try to make out the whereabout of the Hotel de Rostanges."

"Hotel de nonsense!"—exclaimed Massingberd, thoroughly out of sorts. "You will find the Marquis and his wife quietly lodged in some *troisième*—some third floor in the neighbourhood of the Rue de Bac;—that is, if they ever make it convenient to arrive and allow you the use of your own carriage."

"By your own account, they could not be in Paris before Wednesday. *Nous sommes à Lundi.* It is only idle curiosity that leads me in search of their habitation," muttered Greville.

"Idle curiosity, and the attraction of a pair of the bluest eyes that ever vied with a Neapolitan sky!" cried Massingberd.

And though pretending to turn a deaf ear to the insinuation, it was probably because apprehensive of having the jest carried further than he desired, that Greville took up his hat, an-

nouncing his intention of lounging upon the Boulevarts till it was time to repair to Véry's to dinner.

A lounge on foot upon the Boulevarts was a thing quite out of Massingberd's way at any time.—But to appear there, or in any other public place, in the present disorganized state of his toilet, was not to be thought of. Not a movement, not a measure of Fred Massingberd's was attempted without reference to the effect it was likely to produce. Though a complete egotist, he did nothing with an exclusive view to his exclusive enjoyment; or, rather, he placed his exclusive enjoyment in figuring to advantage in the eyes of the world. He was, in fact, one of those useless excrescences of the present highly artificial state of society, which may be compared with the newly-acquired race of orchidaceous plants;—curious weeds, the growth of a noxious climate, and requiring the waste of a fortune to maintain the factitious state of atmosphere essential to their existence.

"How gay—how inspiriting—how different from the pompous dulness of England!"—was

Lord Greville's exclamation, as, sallying forth from the Rue de Richelieu, he turned the angle of the Boulevart des Italiens; and who ever pursued his way along that varying and brilliant causeway, without indulging in a similar exclamation?—The stream of well-dressed people pressing towards the west end of the town, the cheerful countenances, the handsome equipages, the glittering cafés, the splendid shops, and, above all, the general air of life, movement, vivacity, and prosperity, the *gaité de cœur* of the lower classes, and the *entrainement* of the higher, conspire to adorn a scene "able to cure all sadness but despair!"—

Even the sun seems to shine more brightly on the Boulevarts of Paris than elsewhere; owing, probably, to the dazzling whiteness of its houses, and the number of gaudy objects reflecting back from its gay magazins the gladness of day. Above, balconies of flowers, Genoese blinds, gilded balustrades, rising story above story; below, windows composed of single panes of plate-glass, giving to view the rich treasures of the jeweller, the parti-coloured luxuries of the

confectioner, or the gay streamers of the haberdasher, form the chief attraction to the stranger; who sees ladies of fashion in the well-dressed women seated in rows of chairs under the trees overshading the front of the Café de Paris, and men of fashion in the overdressed adventurers congregated before Tortoni's door, or haunting the environs of the Bourse.

But to the resident Parisian, or the foreigner *de bon ton* using the Boulevarts only as a road between the clubs, the Champs Elysées, and Bois de Boulogne, there exists the further satisfaction of noting as they pass the equipages of the great and gay; of exchanging salutations with friends, and glances angry or contemptuous with foes. For this, Greville was of course still disqualified. He beheld cabriolets at least as well appointed as those of his Crockfordite friends, without conceiving who or what might be their showy proprietors; he passed the door of Madame Adde, without being aware that it differed from other flower-shops;—he looked at the gay *corbeilles* of Boissier, without suspecting how important a part they had to

play in the *histoire galante* of modern Paris. All he noticed was the general hilarity of the scene,—the elasticity of the air,—and, above all, their unaccountable influence upon his own heart and spirits.

Pursuing his cheerful way along the gay streets de la Paix and Castiglione,—the especial quarter of the English,—he entered, almost borne along with the throng, the gay gardens of the Tuileries.

It was the second week of May,—the month of blossoms, the month of verdure;—when the over-arching lime-trees appear to be formed of one entire and perfect emerald, and the loftier masses of chesnuts are lightened by a shower of tufted bloom. On either side the stately alley leading from the gate towards the palace, sat triple rows of elegantly-dressed women, smiling and chatting; while further on, towards the flower-gardens, which at that auspicious moment appeared clothed like Peau d'Ane with a robe of lilac-blossoms, were groups of happy children, laughing and skipping, having escaped their *bonnes* and flung away their bonnets to

enjoy under the shade of the green trees the freshness of the bursting spring.

All in that variegated scene was new and strange to Lord Greville. Among the white marble statues peeping from out the foliage, among the lovely women similarly environed, not a single accustomed object,—not a single familiar face!—A foreign language was breathed around him,—a foreign soil was under his feet. Yet he did not feel lonely,—he did not fancy himself an alien. In every other foreign country, a sense of strangeness appears to isolate the traveller;—in France, an universal air of gladness seems to say,—"be one of us—you are welcome!"—

Frederick Massingberd was provoked to almost more than his customary *brusquerie*, when, twenty minutes after the appointed time, Greville made his re-appearance at the hotel.

"We shall be deucedly late!"—said he. "The cabriolet has been half-an-hour at the door!"—

"As we have no one to dine with us, and as it is only at a café—" Lord Greville was beginning—

"A *diner de commande* at a first-rate *restaurant* is as sacred as in a private house!" interrupted his friend. "They are ready to a second, and expect *us* to be the same."

"If *you* expected me to a second, I sincerely beg your pardon!" cried Greville, laughing. "But it strikes me I have waited for you more than half-an-hour, before now,—and on more solemn occasions."

"But where on earth have you been?"

"Lounging about.—In Paris, they say, everyone becomes a *flaneur*."

"Yes, in a proper way. But not on foot,—not on the pavé,—not with the thermometer at 82.—Whom have you seen?"

"Whom?—thousands of people."—

"People!—I mean, have you met anybody one knows?"—

"No one of *my* acquaintance; yours is, of course, more extensive. You should have been with me, to account for some of the numberless pretty faces I saw for the first time."

"Then what in Heaven's name detained you?" persisted Fred, as he drove recklessly

down the Rue de Richelieu towards the Palais Royal.

"The stupid wonder of a novice. I was inexpressibly pleased and amused by all I saw."

"My dear fellow, you must really be more cautious in yielding to such impressions," said Massingberd, gravely. "Remember, you are not known here;—you have your way to make. An Englishman who has been seen neither at the Embassy nor the Union, who goes staring along the Boulevarts, and wanders alone among the nursery-maids in the Tuileries, incurs dreadful risk of being set down as a tiger."

"I am sadly afraid, then, that I have committed myself, and consequently *you*,"—cried Greville, laughing anew at his solemnity. "Forgive me!—I shall know better in a day or two. Under your guidance, I trust I shall become thoroughly Parisianized by the time Madame de Rostanges and her sister arrive."

"I must first ascertain whether these Rostanges are people with whom one can associate," replied Massingberd, checking his horse in a dark filthy street to the rear of the Palais Royal,

containing the private entrance to its principal *restaurants* and popular theatre, and encumbered with fruit-stalls, *gamins*, and *bouquetières*. And even Lord Greville, albeit unapt to play the fastidious, could not forbear noticing with disgust the filthiness of Véry's vestibule, crowded three parts of the year with oyster-women brandishing their knives, and the remaining portion with dirty *marmitons* shredding anchovies into unsightly heaps of very vermicular complexion.

"Not *here*—we are not going to dine in the *salon!*"—cried Massingberd, in a rage, as the garçon, with his skirtless jacket and white apron, shewed the way into a spacious saloon, whose widely-open windows overlooked the green alleys of the gardens of the Palais Royal, in which at that hour hundreds of persons were enjoying their newspaper and their *demie tasse*. "The dinner was ordered by my *courrier*. Shew us into our *cabinet*."

It was in vain the civil waiter assured the indignant Massingberd that "the courier had said nothing of a *cabinet particulier*;—that the courier had probably supposed *ces messieurs*

would find it more cheerful in the public room than in a close little chamber."—The dandy answered by a torrent of hybrid oaths, half English, half French; insisting that a cabinet should be instantly prepared to receive them. After a moment's anxious colloquy with the *dame du comptoir*, to whom the insolent irritability of English exquisitism was probably familiar, they were entreated to wait a moment, while a lady and gentleman who were paying their bill made a hasty exit; and, instead of sitting down to the comfortable table prepared for them beside the open window, were shewn into a little stuffy closet looking towards the dirty, noisy street, strongly perfumed by the *pommes de terre à la Lyonnaise* and other savoury *plats* enjoyed by their predecessors.

"Here, we shall be completely to ourselves,—here, we shall be comfortable!"—cried Massingberd, as the *garçon* proceeded to disencumber a chamber, the size of a four-post bedstead, of the dirty plates and dirty tablecloth. "One could not possibly dine in that horrible *salon*,

—full of English—English of all sorts and conditions of vulgarity."

"I saw several gentlemanly old Frenchmen look up from their dinners, surprised and disturbed by our sudden entrance and exit," said Greville, taking up the Charivari while waiting for his *bisque d'ecrevisses*.

"*Chevaliers d'industrie*, most likely," retorted Massingberd, in his usual tone of disparagement. "What wine shall we have?—some Comète Chablis?—No!—it is the Rocher which is famous for *that*.—We will try the Condriac with our fish,—then, some light claret."

"I condition only for champagne, and well iced," said Greville, oppressed by his hot and dusty walk of the morning.

"Not till the dessert, I entreat!" cried Massingberd; "unless you wish to be set down as an unsophisticated John Bull. It is so thoroughly English to come to a café and call for champagne before the soup is off the table!"—

"Will you allow me some seltzer water, then, and some hock?"—

"*Vin du Rhin*, and welcome," replied the

gastronome. And Greville found that, to lead a quiet life with his friend, he must eat, drink, and sleep only according to *his* discretion.

The dinner, though sworn at dish by dish by Massingberd, proved its own excellence by putting him into high good humour. There were some *coquilles de volaille à la financière*, which the Crockfordite pronounced to be worthy of Francatelle; and by the time he reached his *groseilles de Bar* and *biscuits de Rheims*, with a sedative of *scubac* clear as a jacynth, he would have allowed Lord Greville to go and amuse himself at almost any theatre in Paris.

"After such a dinner, and so many months' abstinence from viands fit to be placed before a Christian," cried Fred, as they re-entered their cabriolet, "one feels as if existence were not quite so great a bore;—one feels as if there were still something worth living for."

Lord Greville, who was of opinion that this world contains a variety of things worth living for, even without reference to the *épigramme d'agneau* and *méringue glacé* he was digesting, ventured to inquire of his companion in

what manner he intended to dispose of their evening.

"La belle Wilmen is no longer here, and Dejazet's name is not in the *affiche* to-night, or I should have proposed remaining where we are," said he, as they passed that dirty, but amusing little temple of ungodliness,—the Theatre of the Palais Royal. "To say the truth," he continued, mysteriously, "I have a word or two to say to St. George, at the club. You shall drop me near the Rue de Grammont. I recommend *you* to try the Vaudeville.—One is always amused at the Vaudeville—or, at worst, made to forget that one is bored."

It happened that Greville had no sensation of the kind from which he wished to be relieved. He was as happy as youth, health, fortune, and the absence of painful or remorseful reminiscences can render a man. He had a clear conscience, and a good digestion; nothing to regret—little to repent;—and, above all, he had been redeemed from the horrible satieties which beset the precocious *blasés* of the day by the habits of his early education. It would have been

Perhaps, however, had the questio
asked him as Frederick Massingberd
from the cabriolet opposite to Chardin's f
door, he might have been tempted to
that his happiness would be more comple
the family of the Marquis de Rostanges
arrived in Paris. Now that the sunshine
no longer on the green trees and bright fi
the Boulevarts, he *did* feel somewhat isola
that gay and stirring metropolis, where nc
was outstretched towards him. "Tak
reins, and drive to the Rue St. Domini
said he, abruptly addressing the tiger of
singberd's *cabriolet de remise.*

"To what number, Sir?"—demanded the

"No matter,—I will tell you when we ar
he replied, not caring to acknowledge
instead of a definite object in the expediti

Unskilled in the localities of Paris, Greville was unaware of the vast distance between the quarter of gay theatres and fashionable coffee-houses, and that of the head-quarters of the aristocracy. At present, all he knew was from the map, where the words Faubourg Montmartre, Faubourg St. Antoine, assert as much to the eye as those of Faubourg St. Honoré or Faubourg St. Germain; nor could he surmise that the question "Is he of the Faubourg?" applied by the exclusive to young Frenchmen of his own condition of life, not only implies exclusively the one Faubourg needful,—the Faubourg St. Germain,—but, "Is he a person with whom we can associate?"—

All that now struck him concerning the Faubourg St. Germain, was its remoteness. They traversed the Place de la Concorde, gleaming with a thousand lights, and presenting its wide asphaltic terraces for the recreation of multitudes enjoying in all directions the fragrance of the adjoining gardens of the Tuileries, and the warm serenity of an enchanting summer night. Then, crossing the bridge towards the

...ver, Sir ! —again de
driver, as they turned into a long d
presenting to a stranger's eye a c
contrast with the broad foot pave
brilliant lights of the Boulevarts.

" Drive on, and I will stop you
Greville. But he was careful not to s
as they passed the lofty *porte cochère* st
by an armorial escutcheon, which
number indicated by the Marquis.
dark, heavy-looking frontage. There
thing auspicious in its aspect; notl
inspired a hope of happy days to be
within. Even the joyous heart of tl
Earl became less elated as, pretending t
ber an engagement, he suddenly orc
driver to return to the Hotel des Prin
had just discovered that he was wretch
with hi-

dim light of a *rèverbere* slung across the centre of the street, produced this unfavourable impression, was, nevertheless, a residence such as the Parisians of high caste delight in;—*entre cour et jardin*,—that is, having an ill-paved court-yard in front, rendered unsightly by the stables and their appendages; and in the rear, a small garden, surrounded by lofty walls, obscuring the inner apartments of the *rez de chausée*, and securing dulness and dampness for the whole house. Still, it was the Hotel de Rostanges; the self-same house in which, a century before, the Marchionesses of Rostanges had smiled upon the gallantries of the Richelieus and Boufflers of their day; the self-same house in which bigotry, ignorance, vanity, and pride, had united to create a race tending to engender the madness of the first revolution and the folly of the second.

The family of Rostanges was one of those which, though devoid of historical associations, maintain a high place among the fugitive archives of society. It had given no field-marshals to the armies of the Bourbons,—no

alliances were irreproachable; its breeding as its blood. During the epochs when a solute court was the order of the day, ther always a chevalier, or abbé, or Marquis de tanges, eminent for his *succès de coulisse* celebrated as the proprietor of some remarl horse, or popular opera dancer. But no sc was decorum re-established on the throne, the family was heard of represented by a devout dowager, or exemplary marquise, a c tered saint, the providence of all the parish the Faubourg.

Though occupying high posts in the disso household of Louis XV., they had manage make themselves fully as acceptable to his able successor; and while the most prudent seclusion preserved them from demonstra

when the ark of the Rostanges family was found, as usual, floating calmly on the surface!—They participated, though with the saving clause of pretended reluctance, in the bounties of the Emperor; and were consequently enabled to throw up their hats for the Bourbons, when the white flag floated anew over the palace of the Tuileries. During the alternation that followed, according to the French proverb, *Ils ont mangé aux deux rateliers.*

The present Marquis was at that period a *cadet de famille*, cousin to the young child in whom were concentered the honours of his house; and right glad to accept, in the favours of the court, the reward conceded to the easy loyalty of the elders of his race. He was then only the handsome Adolphe de Rostanges, the darling of the *petit château*; flourishing his *aiguillettes* as an equerry, and connecting himself but slightly with the Hotel in the Rue St. Dominique, or the fine Château des Etangs, which were under the domination of the widowed Marchioness, mother of the representative of the family and his sister Claire.

The world—that is, the great world—hailed in the showy *élégant* of the court of Madame a charming creature, who gave laws to tailors and made love to princesses. He had a name in the coteries greater than mere title. He was "Adolphe de Rostanges," whom not to know as he galloped on his *gris pommelé* along the Champs Elysées, argued yourself unknowing, if not unknown. To *him*, therefore, at the epoch of the Restoration, rather than to the youthful heir of the house, might the family be said to owe its notoriety. The Rostanges were invariably spoken of to foreigners as "*très bons gentilhommes*,"—the French designation of high nobility; or "*tout ce qu'il y a de plus comme il faut*,"—the Parisian paraphrase of fashionable worthlessness and frivolity.

It was scarcely remembered, indeed, that there was a Marquis de Rostanges in the world as well as an Adolphe; when, lo! just at the epoch of the Revolution of 1830, just as Adolphe was getting a little too grey and wrinkled to be called Adolphe any longer, the accession of a new dynasty enabled the superannuated equerry

when the ark of the Rosamges family was found, as usual, floating calmly on the surface:—They participated, though with the saving clause of pretended reluctance, in the honours of the Emperor; and were consequently ensured to throw up their hats for the Bourbons, when the white flag floated anew over the palace of the Tuileries. During the alternation that followed, according to the French proverb, *Ils ont mangé aux deux ratéliers.*

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twentieth year; and though a considerable portion of his large personalty was inherited by his only sister, the estate of Rostanges, being one of the few *majorats* remaining in France, the uncle who succeeded to the title had to congratulate himself on the acquisition of more than mere barren honours.

It was a singular destiny!—In his youth to enjoy the distinctions of fashion as the *élégant par excellence* of his day; in his old age, when those distinctions had departed, the more positive advantages of rank and fortune!—Though scarcely more courted as the wealthy Marquis than as the handsome Adolphe, it was a miracle, amid the decline and fall of his contemporaries, to remain at par.

His new honours, meanwhile, brought with them new duties. The *ci-devant élégant* was not only obliged to take possession of the hotel in the Rue St. Dominique, which he found far less agreeable than his bachelor *entresol* in the Rue d'Artois, but to reside occasionally at his magnificent Château des Etangs, which he found duller still. The superannuated Adam, weary

of his desolate Eden, was not sorry to be reminded by all the mammas and aunts of his acquaintance that it was incumbent on him to secure the ancient house of Bastanges from extinction, by a timely marriage. "He was only fifty-five years of age;—still handsome, still charming. The noblest families of France would be proud of his alliance."—

For nearly a year, the Marquis suffered himself to be assured and re-assured of this, as if waiting only sufficient encouragement to seek a wife. At length, on being closer pressed, he owned that she was both sought and found; that he was on the eve of marriage with the lovely Sophie de Nangis, the affianced of his deceased young cousin.

"Sophie de Nangis!—a beautiful girl of seventeen, of distinguished descent, and sufficient fortune!—The world was astonished, but the world could do no otherwise than approve! Yet, though *she* too had approved, no one was more astonished on the occasion than the lovely bride.

Sophie and Eugénie de Nangis, orphans from

an early age, had been educated according to the custom of their country, as *pensionnaires* in a convent; the elder sister being contracted to the young Marquis de Rostanges, with whose mother she was closely connected by ties of blood. It was a very suitable marriage. The little girl, when gossiping concerning her future honours with her sister and young companions, was invariably told of the splendours of the Château des Etangs, the delights of the Hotel de Rostanges, and the brilliant part she would have to play hereafter in the society of the Faubourg; and as she advanced in years, the day of Sophie's emancipation from the convent, her marriage day, was anxiously dwelt upon, —with all its pomp and circumstance of the *corbeille de mariage* offered by the bridegroom,—the *trousseau* provided by her guardian, the family diamonds, the cachemires, the point lace,—the everything that bewilders a young imagination tied down to the petty observances of a convent.

Sophie de Nangis smiled as she listened to these details. Though of a mild submissive dis-

position, she felt that she should be glad to enjoy a freer portion of the beauties of nature and the pleasures of life than were to be found within four high walls in the Rue des Fossés St. Victor; and was pleased at the idea of being able to afford a happy home to her sister Eugénie, who, more petulant than herself, was at continual war with the constituted authorities in hood and wimple, by whose precepts and example her irritabilities were restrained.

But she smiled less cheerfully from the period when, on the accomplishment of her fifteenth year, the Marquise de Rostanges obtained permission for the two girls to spend new year's day at her hotel, in order to introduce to her acquaintance the future bridegroom. It was not that the mansion in the Rue St. Dominique appeared as gloomy to her as it had seemed *en passant* to Lord Greville; on the contrary, compared with the denuded walls to which they were accustomed, the two girls regarded it as an earthly paradise. But, alas! the companion of whom she had dreamed in her girlish reveries,—the hero of her romance,—the superior being to

whom she was to dedicate the affections of her heart,—proved to be a raw boy,—feeble, awkward, ungracious, unattractive.

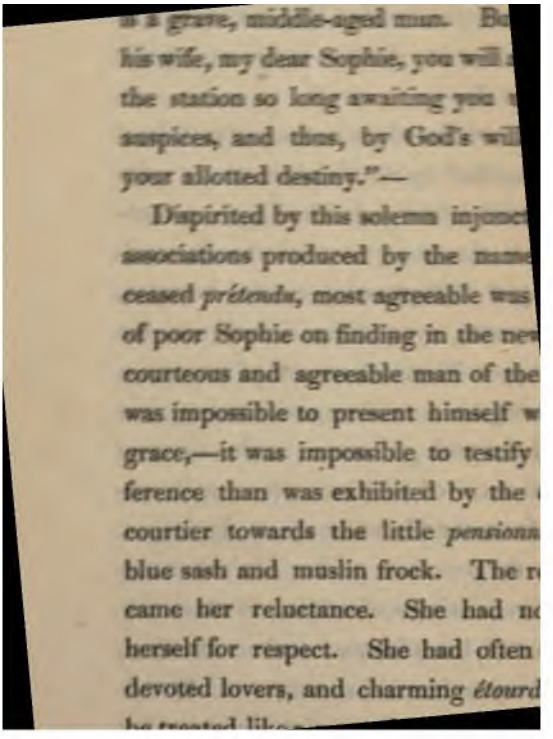
Sophie de Nangis was deeply discouraged. She felt the impossibility of attaching herself to such a being. From that day, she addressed herself with renewed ardour to her devotions, as if conscious of the necessity of supplying herself with a more stable support in life. She saw that existence was not to be the thing she had imagined, and resigned herself despondingly to her lot. It was all she could do to exhibit becoming sympathy, when, a few months afterwards, the alarming illness of the young Marquis was solemnly communicated to her, and in process of time, his death.

She felt almost ashamed, in her consciousness of release, to find herself an object of universal commiseration. "Poor Sophie!—*cette chère et bonne demoiselle!*"—the family diamonds,—the *corbeille de mariage*,—the *trousseau*,—all gone, all vanished!—In three months she was to have become Marchioness de Rostanges,—to have had her opera box, her carriages, her

horses, her *tribune* at St. Thomas d'Aquin.—her all—her everything!—In three months she was to have become the happiest of women!

"In three months," added Eugene de Nangis in a murmur,—"in three months we should have been *free*!"—

Sophie, meanwhile, whose notions of such freedom were modified by recollections of the poor young Marquis's sallow and unintelligent countenance, trusted that she preserved the decorous show of regret indispensable on the occasion. She did, however, sympathise sincerely in the grief of the poor Marchioness and of her cousin Claire; offering her condolences with respect, and accepting theirs with gratitude. In the course of the year, she received with amazement and consternation, from the Marchioness de Rostanges, a hint that the successor to her son's honours and estates was desirous of adding to these advantages that of her alliance; and in due time, the new Marquis himself, accompanied by her guardian, and presented by the Marquise her kinswoman, was announced with due ceremony at the *parloir*.


a grave, middle-aged man. Bu
his wife, my dear Sophie, you will
the station so long awaiting you
auspices, and thus, by God's wil
your allotted destiny."—

Dispirited by this solemn injunc
associations produced by the nam
ceased *prétendu*, most agreeable was
of poor Sophie on finding in the ne
courteous and agreeable man of the
was impossible to present himself w
grace,—it was impossible to testify
ference than was exhibited by the
courtier towards the little *pensionn*
blue sash and muslin frock. The r
came her reluctance. She had n
herself for respect. She had often
devoted lovers, and charming *étourd*
be treated like

mation. Her consent was given on the following day.

It was a match such as Paris—that is, such as the Faubourg containing the exclusive society of Paris — invariably approves. The sole disparity was in years; and the bride, the only person justified in objecting, rather rejoiced in the change which assigned her an agreeable and distinguished friend instead of an uncompanionable boy. The convent applauded; for the same *corbeille, trousseau,* family diamonds, and point lace, awaited the bride; and the same lavish gift of *bonbons, bouquets,* and *friandises* of all young-ladylike description, themselves. Eugénie, too, was enchanted! — the Marquis de Rostanges being charmed to secure so eligible a companion as Mademoiselle de Nangis for the young wife, who might otherwise miss the associates of her own age to whom she had been so long accustomed.

The wedding, in short, was a very happy one, as well as a very brilliant; and in the winter of 1836, Madame la Marquise de Rostanges was installed in her Hotel in the Rue St. Dominique,

name of her husband.

CHAPTER V.

On filait de tristes amours
Constante, bégueule, et dévote,
Dans son château flanqué de tours.
PORCIEN.

Two years had since elapsed. The timid *pensionnaire* had expanded into the elegant young woman; and the wilful Eugénie into the lovely Mademoiselle de Nangis.

Already, the brilliant circle assembled round the young Marquise began to remind her that it was time to think of an establishment in life for her sister; that she must shortly be introduced into the gay world, where the customs of their society scarcely admitted of her appearing,

to their acceptance several matches, like events to augment the family consequ not to secure the happiness of Madem Nangis; and more than one country n of the Château des Etangs had reque intercession of the Marquis with his siste But Eugénie gravely declined the ir tion of the one; and laughingly, that other.

"I have at present seen nothing of the said she. "A new order of things is gr introducing itself among us. A *mar convenance* is no longer an inevitable evil. of my young friends have been permitted and judge for themselves, previous to ing upon the grand step of matrimony. mand the same privilege. I am of a w disposition; my wilfulness would break th

"You describe yourself as a she-wolf, my dearest Eugénie!" her brother-in-law would mildly remonstrate. "Yet during the two years we have lived together, I have never seen your temper so much as ruffled!"—

"How should you?—Have you not forestalled all my whims,—all my wishes?"—was Eugénie's reply. "Is not Sophie an angel, with whom the most reckless person breathing would find it difficult to disagree;—an angel with whom '*donner et pardonner*' is the golden rule of life?"—

"But my friend the Comte de St. Sevron would equally forestal your whims and wishes," resumed the Marquis. "Or, if you persist in rejecting him, your worthy cousin, Colonel d'Aramon, is a man so easy and so frank, that—"

"—I find him insupportable!—" retorted Eugénie. And Madame de Rostanges, who, though happy in her domestic life, felt that the completeness of her comfort was in a great measure attributable to the cheerful and affectionate companionship of her sister, did little to encourage either these, or still more brilliant projects

for her establishment in life. Eugénie was so young,—they were all so happy together,—that she thought there was no need to hurry her choice; and the Marquis, who, since their marriage, had never yet discovered an opinion of his gentle Sophie in which he could not implicitly coincide, sanctioned the decree. The suitors, therefore, were once more courteously dismissed.

Such was the state of affairs when, as they were about to repair to Paris from the Château des Etangs for the winter, in order that Mademoiselle de Nangis might be inaugurated into the pleasures of the carnival, the Fates, jealous of the long career of prosperity assigned to the Adolphe of the court of Louis XVIII.,—the Monsieur le Marquis of the court of Louis Philippe,—decreed that a severe cold, caught in a shooting expedition early in the month of September, should produce such alarming symptoms as necessitated a removal to a milder climate. The Parisian physicians, though maintaining, of course, that the atmosphere of Paris is the purest and best in the world, admitted that

the life of their patient could only be saved by hastening to Italy. To Italy accordingly they went. It was on their return from a winter at Rome, that the brown Noah's-ark containing the family party, had attracted the notice of Lord Greville; and very little did any of them conjecture the importance which circumstances were likely to assign to this fortuitous encounter.

Meanwhile, the porter's lodge of the old hotel in the Rue St. Dominique was hourly visited by anxious friends, and idle acquaintances eager to be anxious about anything, with inquiries after the travellers. They had been more than six months absent. They must have much to tell, or had, at all events, much to hear, which sometimes constitutes the greater merit. The circle in which they lived was curious to ascertain whether the invalid were restored to health, or only patched up for a season; and to know whether Mademoiselle de Nangis had returned hand-free and heart-free from Italy, to be still an object of consideration to families having sons or nephews to dispose of.

The Duchesse de St. Pierre came every day; the Princesse de Chaulieu, and her daughter Sidonie (the convent *bonne amie* of Mademoiselle de Nangis) almost every hour; and when the travellers really made their appearance, and it was found that the delay had been produced by a dangerous incident,—an adventure,—an adventure how strangely heightened in interest by the animated gesticulation and intonation of the narrators,—they increased in value a thousand-fold in the estimation of those who so warmly embraced them on their domestic threshold.

"The poor Marquis must have suffered martyrdom!—I fear all the advantages derived from your sad exile from Paris this winter have been thrown away!"—cried Madame de St. Pierre. "We have had the most charming balls, my dear Sophie;—a *bal costumé*, of which I will tell you the particulars another time; and at which I appeared as Lady Jane Grey, with all my diamonds, and ——"

"Yes, you wrote us word of it," interrupted Eugénie, whose more interesting conversation

with Sidonie the elegant egotist was interrupting.

"And so the life of *ce cher Marquis* was preserved by the intrepidity of a charming young Russian!"—interrupted the chattering old Princess de Chaulieu, in her turn.—"An Englishman, was he?—ay! a foreigner, at all events,—it comes exactly to the same thing. I dare say he was aware of his good fortune, in being the instrument of saving the days of a *chef de famille* of so much importance as our dear marquis! He knew what he was about!—Has he applied yet for a reward?—*Ce cher Marquis* will behave with his accustomed liberality!—Ah! the young Russian is a man of fortune!—so much the better!—you will escape the recompence, and it adds interest to the affair. You must tell me his name, that I may be able to recount the story correctly at the Austrian Embassy, where I shall look in a moment to-night after the opera.—But those Russian names are such a perfect *casse-tête*,—'*Névile*,' '*Grévile*,'—'*Dévile*,'—*comment l'appelez vous?*—At all events, you are sure of your man,—you are

certain that he is not an adventurer,—you are persuaded that it was not *he* who set fire to the château, either as an *écorcheur*, or to pretend to come to your assistance?—quite sure? So much the better!—Ah! you arrived at Paris in his carriage!—What a nuisance for you, my poor dear Marchioness, to be obliged to abandon your own comfortable *berline!*—Those English travelling-carriages, which look so bright and showy, are terribly incommodious!—There is no place for anything,—that is, there is *a* place for everything,—exactly where one don't want to put it!—Indeed!—The Marquis gone to renew his thanks to this invaluable friend!—Where does he lodge?—At the Hotel des Princes?—In the Rue de Richelieu?—My dear children, how could you allow a person in whom you are interested, to put up in such a quarter?—He will be pillaged—ruined!—And then, a league out of the way,—a league out of the world,—a league from the Faubourg!"—

More, much more, would the garrulous old princesse have added, but that the Marquis de Rostanges, accompanied by the individual under

discussion, at that moment entered the room. He needed no announcement. The earnest manner in which the Marchioness and her sister advanced to welcome him, sufficed to prove to their guests that the handsome stranger was no other than the hero of the Grangeneuve romance.

With the graceful cordiality peculiar to the manners of their nation, the Duchesse de St. Pierre, Sidonie and her mother, immediately entreated an introduction to the friend to whom they were all so much indebted; and to the great surprise of Greville, who had recoiled on finding the *salon* of Madame de Rostanges filled with strangers, he found himself a few minutes afterwards, seated familiarly in the midst of them, replying without embarrassment to questions made without embarrassment, though of the most embarrassing nature.

"It is strange enough," said he, in describing the scene afterwards to Frederick Massingberd, "that I, whom *you* accuse of being reserved, and who feel myself to be the shyest dog on earth, am never *gêné* among French people!"—

"I suppose their cursed impudence serves to put you at your ease," replied the most modest of dandies.

"No,—I know many impudent people who *never* put me at my ease," replied Greville, drily. "I believe it to arise from their great simplicity of manners. The English are always pretending to be something beyond their reality; the French are content to appear what they are. Our country-people, with great affectation of sincerity, are the least genuine of created beings. An Englishman situated with respect to me as the Marquis de Rostanges is, would have sent me a dinner invitation at a fortnight's notice, and got up a gorgeous entertainment. The old gentleman on finding me alone here this morning, carried me off to his home, which I found in all the confusion incident on their recent arrival; presented me *sans façon* to his friends; and would have fain have me share what he called his *soupe* and *bouilli* to-day, had I not pleaded my engagement with you and St. George at the Rocher."

"What an escape!—you have no conception

of the *ordinaire* of an ordinary French family!" cried Massingberd, with an air of nausea.

"I am no great *gourmand*. I should have been quite satisfied to pass the day and dine with them, as they wished," replied Greville; "but I know that you and St. George would make an outcry. However, I have promised that we will both dine there to-morrow!"—

"Thanks!—I hope I know better!—St. George and I dine at the club."—

"You must write your own excuse, then!"

"Not I. I have not French enough for any such undertaking. You may tell them that I had another engagement."

"But you would not be guilty of such rudeness to any Englishman of Monsieur de Rostanges's age and rank?—Why give him such an opinion of our ill-breeding as must arise from such marked disrespect?"—cried the Earl.

"Disrespect!—Why who on earth ever heard of the Marquis de Rostanges?"—exclaimed Massingberd.

"Who on earth—out of England—ever heard of half our own nobility?"—argued Greville.

"The Marquis seems to hold an excellent position here."

"My dear fellow,—remember the brown Noah's-ark!—Recollect the snobbish country-cousin who burnt down his house toasting cakes for their supper!"—

"Recollect the equipages of some of the *eminentissimi* of Italy," replied Greville. "And what great family in England but has some small squire of a country cousin, among its junior branches?"—Then, hastily resuming, lest Massingberd might see in this remark a sarcasm levelled at himself, he added—"We must not measure everything by the narrow scale of our English experience. I am convinced that the Rostanges family is one of high account; and whether it be so or not, it is one from whose society I expect to derive my chief enjoyment during my stay in Paris."

"*Je vous en fais mon compliment!*—All I entreat is, that you will allow me to look for *my* amusements elsewhere!"—rejoined Fred Massingberd, with unfeigned contempt.

"By the way," added the Earl, "the Prin-

cesse de Chaulieu, to whom you were mentioned by her friends the Rostanges, desired me to tell you that she was at home every Tuesday evening; and the Duchesse de St. Pierre, that she receives every Thursday. You will, of course, call on both as an acknowledgment of their civility?"—

"My fellow shall leave a card for me; but as to those cursed evening visits of the Faubourg, all I have heard from St. George determines me not to waste my time in any such *corvée*," replied Fred. "Madame de Chaulieu's, I find, is the sort of coterie where everyone belongs to somebody,—*où chacun a sa chacune*,—and where those who have *not* paired off, stand with their hands in their pockets, looking *tombé des nues*."

"You are better versed in such matters than I can pretend to be," said Greville, amused by his affectation. "Next week, when I have seen with my eyes and heard with my ears, I shall be better able to take the field against you."

Meanwhile, the Earl was not ill pleased that Massingberd should evince so much reluctance to enter the society of the hotel de Rostanges.

He was not yet prepared to admit, even to himself, how completely he was captivated by the beauty and manners of both sisters, or the quiet good breeding of the Marquis; but he saw that the pretensions and dandyism of Fred Massingberd would be thoroughly out of place among them. His affectation of libertinism would disgust Eugénie and her sister; and his overbearing and unmeaning self-sufficiency, startle the easy old epicurean of a higher school. Greville felt, in short, that he should have been embarrassed by Massingberd's companionship. Simple in his own tastes, and unpretending in his demeanour, he was prepared to be pleased and to seek to please among the strangers who rated so highly the kind offices he had been able to render them. He did not wish to be disturbed in the attempt by the slang and arrogance of St. James's Street.

"*Allons, donc!*—You had better relent in your own favour, and dine with us at the Union?"—persisted Fred, on the day when Greville was proceeding to keep his engagement in the Rue St. Dominique. "You were admitted this morning."

"I told you before, that I had accepted the invitation of Monsieur de Rostanges," replied the Earl.

"But, of course, the old creature must have known that the engagement was conditional of finding nothing better?—What right has a man to expect punctuality in such matters, who will give you *pour tout potage* a Julienne savouring of burnt onions,—three or four greasy entrées,—and a *plat d'épinards* looking like green baize made easy!—I can see you now, making contortions over his light Bourdeaux!—Heavenly powers!—the domestic claret of a gentleman who grows his own wine!"—

Lord Greville, however, was not to be intimidated from his purpose; and, as he expected, he found the establishment of the Marquis de Rostanges unostentatiously, but admirably, organized. If a few of the extraneous luxuries of an English household were wanting, the cheerful sociability with which the dinner was conducted more than replaced the laborious pomp of a London dinner party.

"We are exact," observed the Marquis,

sitting down precisely as the clock struck six, "because we hope you will accompany us to the opera. Madame de Rostanges has her box to-night."

Lord Greville bowed his acceptance. This was an improvement on the prospect of an evening *en famille*. Yet, before dinner was over, he began to feel that even an evening *en famille* might be very tolerable with a man so superabounding in anecdote and knowledge of the world as Monsieur de Rostanges, a girl so intelligent as Eugénie de Nangis, and an auditor so attentive and willing to be pleased as the gentle Marchioness. Throughout dinner, the conversation was lively and pointed, yet never at the expense of others; and when, at length, the Earl took his place behind the chair of Madame de Rostanges, in one of the best boxes at the Académie, he felt in the happiest flow of spirits, and prepared to enjoy a delightful evening.

Eugénie and her sister, young, lovely, conversational, were companions not likely to diminish his enjoyment of one of the masterpieces of Meyerbeer.

The brilliant aspect of the *salle*, differing so agreeably from those which Greville had recently visited in Italy, surprised and delighted him. He even preferred the elegant *demie toilette* of the female portion of the audience, to the garishness of full dress adopted at the opera in London. The simplicity of their attire, as well as their profound attention to the music, seemed to prove that they came thither to be amused, rather than to exhibit themselves for the amusement of others. It was the first time, indeed, he had found occasion to notice the genuine amusability of the French. Scarcely ever had he made one of an English party of pleasure, without being annoyed at the indifference or scorn, real or pretended, of every individual present. Nothing was good enough for them,—nothing worth attending to; and while grumbling so loudly at their folly in being decoyed into "such a failure," how was it possible for others to know whether they were amused or not?—He had now the satisfaction of being with indulgent auditors,—gratified spectators,—genial spirits.—

"I hope you admire my handsome cousin?" —inquired Madame de Rostanges of Lord Greville, on seeing his glass fixed upon the box of the Duchesse de St. Pierre.

"Strikingly beautiful!" was his reply.

"And as charming as she is beautiful," added Madame de Rostanges. "Claire is the best of wives and mothers, though one of the gayest and most popular beauties of the day. You must go to her soirées.—*Her* society differs entirely from ours;—*her* society is that of the pure Faubourg."

"You forget that Lord Greville understands nothing at present of our conventional phrases," remonstrated Mademoiselle de Nangis. "How is he to guess what you mean by the pure Faubourg?"

"Experience will tell him," added her sister, turning round to make sure that the Marquis de Rostanges was no longer in the box, "that the pure Faubourg consists of the ultra Carlists, —the families who remain unshaken in their allegiance to the elder branch of the Bourbons."

"Among whom, then, the family of Rostanges is not included?"—said Lord Greville.

"My husband is an adherent of the reigning family," replied the Marquise, blushing. "My own family and that of the late Marquis de Rostanges, entertain different principles; but my husband has retired from public life, and is so moderate in the expression of his political opinions, that no family breach has ensued."

"I fancied," said Lord Greville," that a considerable fusion of parties had taken place in Paris?"

"The lapse of ten years has of course done something to modify the animosities created by the revolution of 1830," replied Madame de Rostanges. "Many of the most violent partisans of the elder branch have become dispirited by the hopelessness of their cause; many have been won over by the virtues of the royal family; and many more are recalled by the exigencies of their own to the recollection that they are *Français avant tout*;—that it is their duty to support the throne,—*quand même*."

"Many, however, still remain unwavering in

their fidelity to Henri de Bourdeaux," added Eugénie. "The most eminent of our Carlist families are resident in Austria or Italy; but we have a few among us who desert neither their country nor their cause;—some, faithful as a matter of affection;—some, as a matter of *bon ton*. No one," she continued, turning with a smile towards Greville, "can be really fashionable who is not of the *pure Faubourg*,—and being of the pure Faubourg implies pure Carlism."

Greville smiled at the gay earnestness with which she expounded her text. But his attention was at that moment arrested by the unwelcome discovery that, in a box immediately opposite, though on a higher tier, sat Lord St. George, Frederick Massingberd, and two other English dandies, whose faces were familiar to him though their names were unknown. The lorgnettes of all four were insolently fixed upon the Marchioness de Rostanges and her sister; and the colour rushed to Lord Greville's temples as he saw at a glance not only that he was unmercifully quizzed by the four dandies, but that

his fair companions were even more relentlessly handled. It is not till he finds some woman interesting to his feelings fall under the lash of such a coterie, that a man becomes duly sensitive to the profanation induced by their licentiousness. If looks could kill, the laughing, sneering Massingberd would unquestionably have fallen a victim to those launched at him by Lord Greville!—

Fortunately, the rising of the curtain put an end to their mute dialogue; and during the ensuing entr'acte, such a succession of visitors presented themselves to pay their compliments to Madame de Rostanges, that Greville felt bound to vacate his seat in their favour and take a turn in the *foyer*. For a moment, he entered the box of the Duchesse de St. Pierre; with the view of establishing himself as an acquaintance of the cousin of Sophie and Eugénie, but with the unlooked-for consequence of exciting the jealous envy of the unholy inquisition of English dandies.

"Where the deuce did you pick up that lovely creature?"—demanded Fred Massing-

berd, when, at the close of the opera, they met at Tortoni's.—

"That lovely creature was the lady of the brown Noah's-ark," replied Greville, his own thoughts engrossed by Madame de Rostanges.

"I don't mean those stupid people!—I saw you domesticated with *them*, and pitied your infatuation.—*I* allude to the lovely woman with whom Noailles was sitting when you entered her box."—

"The Duchesse de St. Pierre;—by birth a Rostanges," replied Greville.

"*Née* Mademoiselle de Rostanges, eh?—I never should have guessed it!—However, she has thrown off the family quizzicality, as in duty bound. I never saw a more exquisite soul. St. George was citing Madame de St. Pierre to me yesterday as one of the *lionnes* most in vogue."

"Literary, then?"—

"WHAT?"—reiterated Massingberd, with an air of as much loathing as if he had heard the lady of his thoughts accused of theft or murder.

"I thought you called her a lioness?"—

"I called her a *lionne*, which implies a very

different species of animal. A *lionne* is a woman of fashion of the most pre-eminent kind, just as a *lion* is an ultra dandy."

"An epithet of derision, then?"

"Not more so than exquisite or exclusive among ourselves. It depends on the person to whom it is applied, and *by* whom."

"When you called the Duchesse de St. Pierre a *lionne*, for instance?" said Greville, turning towards Lord St. George.

"I intended to point her out to admiration. Every set and coterie here has its *lions* and *lionnes*," said Lord St. George, as if supplying valuable information to a new comer; "though all swear that they exist only in some other. The name had its rise among the rich fashionables of the Chaussée d'Antin; where a little knot of the prettiest women of the day, distinguished by their dress, equipage, fêtes, and flirtations, were signalized as *Les Lionnes*. Either *les lionnes* themselves, or the world in general, soon discovered that the Faubourg, too, had its *lionnes*. It became the pet name, the cant phrase of society. At the club, one talks of *Monsieur* un

tel as '*le lion de Madame une telle.*' Moreover *les lionnes* introduce all the new fashions,—have customs, manners, and a costume of their own. I wont tell you all we say about them,—for you are inexperienced enough in such matters to repeat it to one of the leaders of the class; or to confound *les lionnes* with animals more ignominiously named, and *not* to be named to ears polite."

"I seldom err through much talking," replied Greville, carelessly.

"*Jusqu'ici!*—But how can we guess into what excesses you may fall in your new character?" cried Massingberd. "I swear I did not know you to-night, when you were hanging over the chair of that demure little Madame de Rostanges;—you, who at Malta swore you were too shy to be presented to Lady Harriet Wilscourt,—too shy to ride with her daughters,—too shy to dance,—too shy to flirt,—too shy to do anything that becomes a Christianly young lord,—especially if rich and unmarried!"

"Well!—I still plead guilty.—I dislike balls, and hate the society of strangers."

"The deuce you do! And how long, then, my dear Greville, have these Rostanges people been your intimate friends?"—inquired Lord St. George.

"Precisely as long as I have known them," replied the Earl. "Accident sometimes ripens an intimacy more than years of acquaintance. I had an opportunity of serving them,—they are grateful,—we like each other."—

"*Et c'est une affaire faite!*—Why, a roué of half a dozen years' London and Paris experience could not have managed matters better," cried Lord St. George.

"After all, Grev, your mother is deuced right to keep so sharp a look out after you," said Massingberd, commencing a second Plombirères. "You are a sly dog! If you had been of age at one-and-twenty, like myself and other nobodies, there would not have been an acre of your estate, or a scruple of your heart extant by this time!"

"A scruple of conscience, perhaps you mean?"—

"No—I spoke literally,—and will say penny-

weight, since I must speak by measure. One word more, however, on the subject.—Take notice, that I look upon you as a lost man, and shall henceforth make out my time at Paris in happy independence. But in the mean time, let us understand each other. How much of this new *liaison* of yours is to be known at the Hotel Bristol?"—

"All, and everything. My mother will spend a fortnight in Paris. I expect that the greater part of her enjoyment here will be derived from the society of the Hotel de Rostanges."

"When Lady Greville hears as much, I suspect her fortnight will be shortened to a week!" —was Fred Massingberd's muttered reply. "If she would but carry off Julia and Cobham, I should say '*bon voyage!*'—Well!—I suppose they will all be here in a day or two, to bury us under a wet blanket!—*En attendant, mon cher, amusons nous bien!*"—

CHAPTER VI.

On ne s'imagine pas combien il faut d'esprit pour ne pas être ridicule.

DIDEROT.

WHOEVER chances to arrive in Paris at the commencement of the month of May, or in London at the beginning of the month of July, is pretty sure to be informed by the first friend he accosts, that he is come too late;—that the season is over,—that everybody is gone,—that there have been charming balls for the last three months, but that there will be no more;—that the town is getting thin, empty, dull, stale, flat, and unprofitable.

Yet those most experienced in the pleasures

of both capitals are aware that "then comes in the sweet o' the year." In the first place, it is the height of summer in the several climates; and where is summer otherwise than delightful? — In the next, it is the sober and the aged only who have been eager to depart into the country. All that is young and gay remains, upholding the banner of Pleasure so long as a single breeze remains to agitate its silken drapery.

In Paris, above all, this is unquestionable. If a foreigner desire to see the city in its fullest attraction, let him arrive there on the first of May, — on the fête-day of Louis Philippe, — when the population, pouring forth amid the lilac-bushes of the Tuileries, mingles its cheers with the blaze and uproar of fireworks, and the choral song of a gay orchestra; and whether his political principles lead him to the brilliant saloons of the palace, where the last court held for the season congregates the fairest faces in France if not the most illustrious designations, or to the throng disporting along the gaily illuminated avenues of the Champs Elysées, he

will admit that Paris is the city of merry hearts and ingratiating smiles; and that the month of May is never more auspiciously ushered in, than amid the silver fountains and blooming groves of the Parisian gardens.

Flowers in profusion greet him in every street; and the airy summer-costume so readily adopted by the French on the first gleam of sunshine, serves to refresh and cheer the eye after the prolonged dreariness of winter. Hundreds of young and pretty women glancing by in open carriages, pausing perhaps at the flower-market of the Madeleine, on their way to their daily drive in the Champs Elysées, excite his interest. It is yet too early in the season for the imperfect shade and unwatered roads of the Bois de Boulogne. The gay world, more concentrated in its haunts, remains ostensible to eyes profane: and though the crowded halls of the Carnival, royal, ministerial, and diplomatic, are at an end, there are the intimate *réunions* of the Faubourg, —the charming *matinées musicales* of amateurs, and the *déjeûners* of the English and Austrian ambassadresses, not to mention those of that

golden sovereign of the ambassadresses' royal and imperial master—Rothschild, the Great.

Races in the Champs de Mars,—races at Chantilly,—at Versailles,—if they do not, like those of Epsom and Ascot, transfer fortunes from pocket to pocket, serve at least to assemble the *grand monde*,—the *beau monde*,—the world which is always best worth looking at, if not best worth listening to; and, later still, the amphitheatre of Franconi in the Champs Elysées, affords a lounge in the course of the evening drive, as a *point de réunion* for such as wish to find themselves together.

For those who neither ride nor drive, there are still the shady gardens of the Tuileries, wherein to sit and ruminate in the midst of a gay and ever-moving spectacle; enjoying the society of a friend in a dry, warm, cloudless atmosphere, — with green boughs overhead, and cries of joy and merriment around.

Such a Paris as this is surely preferable to the more crowded city of January, whose ways are dreariness, and whose paths mud; and though, night after night, the tumultuous ball-rooms of

the great world may afford compensation to the mere seeker after fêtes, all reasonable beings will miss in the brilliant Paris of the carnival, those sunshiny hours of universal enjoyment, when the animated metropolis seems inspired with impulses of happiness and hope.

Climate is not without its share in all this. It is not to be inferred that those favoured few of the English aristocracy who evince, on arriving in Paris, so keen a sense of enjoyment of its simplest pleasures, are actuated by the mere consciousness of being freer from observation, and emancipated from the pompous restraints of a gorgeous home. The lightness of the soil and atmosphere induce a freer circulation of the blood. The fogs of London, its east wind, its city smother, no longer oppress their lungs and consequently their spirits. The sky is blue above,—the earth dry below,—the sun bright in the heavens, and reflecting its brightness into the inner recesses of the heart.

The bosom's lord sits lightly on his throne.

Prepared to be pleased, even the most pre-

tending of English travellers ceases to be fastidious, overbearing, and disagreeable.

Fred Massingberd himself became somewhat subdued in his impertinence, after a week's sojourn among those who were neither intimidated nor captivated by his *brusqueries*. The utmost emotion he had excited was surprise; and when he discovered that his credit as a Crockfordite went for nothing, either in shop, club, or coterie, that he was required to pay his way in ready money and ready wit, he became reduced to his true level. The bravado of a London man of small fortune, out of London, is precisely the discomfited audacity of a buffoon in a pantomime; who attempts to astonish the audience with a wonderful leap, and has the trapdoor slammed in his face.

Not that in Paris, especially in its less exclusive clubs, he did not find specimens of *la jeune France*, having a cigar or a bet constantly in their mouths, who vied with himself in talking of steeple-chases and opera-dancers, though with less proficiency than their St. James's-Street prototypes. But these were not the rising patri-

cians of Paris. These were mere pretenders to consequence and fashion. The young associates of Lord Greville in the salons of the Faubourg St. Germain, if in truth equally dissolute, were at least well-bred and accomplished. *Their* slang was not introduced into such circles as those of Madame de Rostanges. However high their stake at whist, or their bets at the Jockey club, however wild their pursuits there or elsewhere, no sooner did they present themselves in female society than their tone became insensibly refined, their manners deferential, and their conversation animated and polished. Massingberd would gladly have disparaged them. But after calling them "spooneys" for a day or two, he was forced to admit (oh, universal criterion of merit in the mind of a young Englishman!) that they had horses which would not disgrace Hyde Park, and rode them with courage and address.

"But please to remember," remonstrated Fred, "most of their stables are furnished from London;—horses, grooms, everything!—Achille de Cerny and Frédéric de St. Pierre, for in-

stance, have spent their winter at Melton, and their spring in town. Achille, I remember there perfectly, and a devilish good fellow, too!—I recollect we cleaned him out!—Scarcely a rap left to take him home!—We were talking over together the merry nights we spent in Leicestershire, the other day at Bénédict's."

"St. Pierre, too, I recollect at the Travellers. After all, one can't be surprised that they have *some* gentlemanly men among them, considering the closeness of the intercourse between the two countries," — observed Lord St. George, apologetically.

Had Greville been present, he might have been tempted to say *in spite* of the intercourse between the two countries; so deeply was he disgusted by the bearing adopted towards him by Fred Massingberd and his clique, whenever they met him in company with Monsieur and Madame de Rostanges. The flippant coarseness of their irony, he trusted, might pass unnoticed by Eugénie and her sister, who were indifferently skilled in English. But he could scarcely hope that the vulgar significance of

their smiles would long escape the attention of the Marquis; who, though inert and feeble, was essentially a man of the world.

A certain degree of consciousness, of course, heightened his susceptibility. He felt that he was devoting more of his time than was altogether reasonable, to persons so little and so recently known. But then came the usual self-delusion of a man similarly infatuated—that it was not to last;—that from the moment of Lady Greville's arrival, he should be required to devote himself to his mother; and that the moment she determined upon returning to England, he should be compelled to bid adieu, a long adieu, perhaps an eternal one, to those in whose society he was beginning to take such unqualified delight.

Every day found him a visitor to the Hotel de Rostanges. The same pretext that served to excuse him to himself, afforded to others a plea for his assiduities. He was a bird of passage,—he was on the wing,—he had at most a few weeks, perhaps only a few days, to remain in Paris; he might never return, or returning,

by the Marquis's entreaties that
make himself at home under his ro
daily *couvert* at his table, offered w
warmth, was rarely indeed accepted.
day at two o'clock, every day from the
Madame de Rostanges' saloon was
morning visitors, the dark, plain cal
the young English lord was seen to e
courtyard; there to remain till the ca
the Marquise issued forth, an hour
dinner, to convey them to the Champs
or the Bois.

It was seen, and seen without cc
The St. Pierres, the Chaulieus, the inti
general of the Rostanges' family, were
with so agreeable an accession to thei
The eminence of Lord Greville's social
had been readily ascertained; and it h

sirables to scramble into more accessible and more showy society. In his own person, too, Greville was thoroughly acceptable. Instinctive good breeding and cultivation of mind are no mean enhancements to aristocratic distinction. But he possessed attractions more rare or newer to the Faubourg. His shyness once overcome, he was an admirable *raconteur*; and Eugénie and her sister were never weary of listening to his descriptions of Oriental scenery, or piquant sketches of the adventures of his travels and voyages.—Greville had done more in Egypt than shoot ibises,—more in Greece, than indite sonnets to the maid of Athens. He had visited the finest countries in the world with a freshness of heart and eye that rendered all his perceptions doubly vivid, and imparted peculiar originality to his reminiscences. It was difficult, in short, to be more amusing than Greville, when, unshackled by the presence of strangers, he *talked out*. Incited by the lively repartees of Mademoiselle de Nangis, he would indulge in a thousand sportive hypotheses, based upon those mysterious relics of the ancient

world which had passed under his investigation. And while he thus diverged

From grave to gay, from lively to severe,

the two sisters, after the fashion of the gentle lady captivated by the hairbreadth 'scapes and monstrous adventures of the Moor, did "seriously incline" to prefer the society of one whose conversational powers were so much more varied than the *phrases d'usage* of the best *causeurs* of their coterie.

Once established in their set, he soon became the friend of their friends. All were eager to extend their hospitalities to the popular Lord Greville.

"Invited to the Princesse de Moutfaucon's déjeûner—to the Russian Ambassadress's morning concert—to the Duchesse de Monthémont's *soirées dansantes?*"—cried Lord St. George, casting his eyes over the *billets d'invitation*, lying on Greville's table. "Upon my soul, Greville, for a shy fellow (as you say you are) you manage to get on wonderfully!—Why, these are the fixed stars of the Faubourg!—I flatter my-

self I stand pretty well in Paris. I flatter myself I am pretty well received at the embassy, and on a tolerably good footing with Orleans and Nemours. But I never so much as saw the interior of one of those Faubourg houses!"—

"You have perhaps assigned the reason," said Greville, willing to spare his self-love, "in your intimacy with the Princes."

"No, no — my dear fellow. Many men of the Faubourg have been drawn into an acquaintance with the Duke of Orleans, through the interests of the Turf. The Jockey Club, like misery, makes a man acquainted with strange bedfellows.. No!—it is not politics that have caused my ostracism; for, sooth to say, I never was at the trouble of setting foot in the Tuileries."

"Perhaps equally you avoided the trouble of seeking an introduction to the Carlist circles? They are not people to thrust their civilities upon a stranger. Their habits of life are simple, —their fêtes unostentatious; and unless certain that foreigners really desire to be acquainted with them, and to accept their hospitalities in the same frank spirit they are offered, would

rather not see fussy, sneering Englishwomen, or cold supercilious Englishmen, encumbering the doorways of their *salons.*"

"*I* am never likely to encumber their doorways!" cried Lord St. George, reddening.—"I hate all that sort of thing.—Twopenny whist, (the everlasting French game, too!) *eau sucrée* and a couple of *quinquets*,—do not enter into my conceptions of amusement!—Ten to one rather stick to my club!"—

"There!—you have exemplified my meaning at once. The old French society is afraid of inviting us, because they *know* we don't like modest *soirées*, and would rather stick to our club. You have completely justified them. They measure our desires by the splendid hospitalities of our embassy, where everything is conducted on a scale which three of their fortunes united could not compass; and which, even if they could, would be incompatible with the general simplicity of their modes of life."

"*Simplicity!*—shabbiness, you mean!" cried St. George. "The French are naturally addicted to paltry pitiful ways. They talk about the excellent arrangement of our establishments,

and the admirable order of our household service. By Jove! a Monsieur le Comte would die of fright at a single day's expenses of one of our steward's rooms, servants' halls, or hunting stables!"

"And well he might,—since it would probably include his quarter's income!"—replied Greville, seriously. "That which you call shabbiness, *I* call order. The French are prudent people; they seldom run out. It is rare, I find, for one of their great families to be in embarrassed circumstances.—I will not ask you to look at home."

"They can't run out if they would," sneered Lord St. George.—"Credit is unknown in Paris; and how can people be ruined who are required to pay ready money?"—

"You are offering an unanswerable argument in favour of short payments," cried Greville, laughing. "However, I must still maintain that the French possess more than ourselves a tendency to regulate their expenses by their means. Their fortunes are inconsiderable compared with those of England;—yet, the pru-

[illegible] pack of useless servi
don't keep a hall full of powdered
mere show. They have only the m
quire, each of whom costs them, fr
last, fifty pounds a year,—the mer
an English butler," observed S
"But then these brutes are k
rough, in a way that no English fe
support."

"*They* at least do not appea
fied.—What attached servants!—A
length of time they remain in families
what respectful affection their duty is p
The Marquis de Rostanges has b
thousand a year, and lives within h
Yet I declare to you I never saw a
intérieur more unexceptionable."

"I dare say he takes care that
[illegible]

thing consists in the fact that nothing *is* got up. A French house does not admit of the superficial ostentation practised in England. Everything passes under one's eyes,—everything is canvassed.—It is not an article of good breeding, as with us, to be ignorant of all that is going on in your establishment."

"Thank Heaven, we have better things to amuse us than such dirty details!" exclaimed St. George, warming. "Our women boast accomplishments that afford occupation for their time; our men, their political pursuits, which—"

"Do not altogether detach us from the stable, or prevent our better halves from wasting their mornings in shopping, or gossiping with their attendants," replied Greville.

"With respect to our countrywomen, at least," observed Lord St. George, "it behoves us to speak feelingly. An Englishwoman with her half dozen, dozen, or dozen and a half of children, passes her best days as a nurse, and consequently as the companion of nurses. Two or three olive branches at the utmost, form the stint here, where the property must be equally

divided; and your Frenchwoman, married at seventeen, turns over her two little ugly monkeys to the care of a *bonne*, and returns at twenty, unencumbered, to the pleasures of society."

"I have reason, nevertheless, to believe them tender and attentive mothers," remonstrated Greville, angrily.

"Because the meagreness of their establishments compels them to have their children always in the way!"—retorted St. George, with a smile. "At Greville Abbey, at least, Madame la Comtesse will acquire habits more suitable!"—

"Of whom, and what, are you talking?"—cried Lord Greville, in utter amazement.

"Of Eugénie, Countess of Greville,—with whom, I trust, my friend Lady Greville may be as much enchanted as yourself," replied St. George, settling his cravat at the glass.

"I have no doubt my mother *will* be enchanted with Mademoiselle de Nangis," replied Lord Greville, gravely; "because an unaffected, well-bred person rarely fails to please. But you will shortly have an opportunity of judging.

My mother writes me word," he continued, addressing Massingberd, who had just entered the room and thrown himself into a corner of the sofa,—" that, having been detained all this time at Milan, by the illness of Sir James Cobham——"

"You don't mean to say that Lady Greville has been staying out of compliment to Cobham's infernal gout?"—interrupted Fred, without ceremony.

"Lady Cobham was so nervous at the idea of remaining alone with the invalid, that my mother kindly consented to the delay," replied Greville.

"For which, I trust, you feel duly grateful to Julia and her nervousness."—cried Massingberd. "Ah Grev, my boy!—had Lady Greville been established all this time at the Hotel de Bristol, what would have become of the Hotel des Anges, in the Rue St. Dominique?"—

"We should have spent many agreeable days there together," replied the Earl.—"My first object on my mother's arrival, will be to make her acquainted with two of the most charming women in France."

"By Heavens! I hardly know what to make of Grev!"—said Massingberd to Lord St. George, as they ate their quails, with Seville-orange juice, and drank their *Madère sec* together, that evening at the club. "I'm afraid it's all up with him!—He is beginning to have a will of his own—and a cursed foolish one it seems to be!"—

"Ay, ay!—the governante is still a hundred leagues off!" replied Lord St. George. "Let us see how far he will venture, when mamma comes with her imperturbable face and indisputable authority!— If Lady Greville leave him here eight-and-forty hours after her arrival, I'm mistaken in my woman!"—

"I'm mistaken in my man, if he submit to be bullied much longer!"—answered Fred, with a knowing nod.

"He never *was* bullied,—and that constituted the real charm of the business;—he was cajoled!" cried St. George. "Fathers are sometimes asses enough to bully their sons,—mothers, never. Women have a natural tendency to humbug. They begin by flummering their lovers,—their husbands,—and end by

flummering their sons.—A fit of hysterics does the business."

"I should like to see *my* mother in a fit of hysterics!"—cried the incorrigible Fred, swallowing a sip of curaçoa.

"*Your* governor has the reins in his hands," replied his companion; "or, depend upon it, you would have been *caliné* in your turn. As to Greville, you will see him quietly driven out of Paris as you see people walked talking off the stage, in a comedy, unconscious that they are led from the field."

"The Rue St. Dominique has two to one against her, remember!" cried Fred. "Between the black eyes of the charming brunette, and the dove's eyes of that demure Madame de Rostanges ——"

"Greville must have a happy time of it!" interrupted Lord St. George. "And now, when you have done with your *rince-bouche,— au Jockei!* I have not had a touch at billiards with you these hundred years!"

CHAPTER VII.

On s'attache par ses bienfaits. C'est une nature. Il est juste que le bonheur d'aimer pense de bien faire.

Lord Greville had, indeed, a h of it!—Like most men educated by he had imbibed a taste for femal beyond that engendered by mere gallantry. Among them was his l happiness. Hitherto he had found backs to his satisfaction; natural shy the apprehension of

with a frankness that rendered it impossible to be shy; and the feeling once surmounted, reserved persons become doubly attached to those who have enabled them to overcome their infirmity. As to deference connected with the dignities, from the general ignorance of Eugene and her sister concerning European and its society, he saw that they were utterly incapable of comprehending the position of a wealthy English peer. The Marquis de Rostanges, with his moderate estate, modest income, and total absence of privilege, evidently looked upon him as an equal, but nothing more.

He was happy, then, because welcomed as a friend and brother by those towards whom, in an hour of danger, he had acted a friend and brother's part, and whom he felt to be dear to him as his life. Mild, gentle, simple in her tastes, graceful in her demeanour, — he looked upon Madame de Rostanges as a more refined reflection of his mother — his mother as she might have been at eighteen, before the cares and turmoil of the world had withered the

[redacted]

tranquil equanimity. She was happy as the wife of the amiable valetudinarian, so studious of her comfort, and so kind a brother to her dear Eugénie;—contented, cheerful, grateful,—unconscious of the existence of domestic happiness more vivid or more varied than her own.

The character of Mademoiselle de Nangis, on the other hand, was cast in a deeper mould. Spirited, high-minded, a girl in petulance, a woman in strength of feeling,—the same impatience of unmeaning restraints which had rendered Eugénie a turbulent inmate of the convent, made her a somewhat unpopular member of the insipid coteries of the Faubourg. She was too candid in her caprices, as well as too decided in her opinions, for the *beau idéal* of a *demoiselle Française de bonne maison*, which implies an automaton with downcast eyes, that curtsies low when spoken to, and awaits without the demonstration of an idea or a sentiment the fortunate individual designated by those in authority over it, to endow it with "a local habitation and a name,"—a diamond necklace, taste, reason, and sensibility.

From the harshness or coldness often characteristic of a mind powerfully organized, Eugénie de Nangis was secured by the vivacity of her national character. English people of superior abilities are apt to concentrate themselves into a stern gravity which, with the uninformed, passes for dulness. The French, even the most reflective, reflect aloud. Their meditative powers are vocable. If, according to our code, "happiness is born a twin," philosophy has with them a birth equally co-partite. A superior man does not imply, in France, a man too clever for ordinary purposes, who distinguishes himself by got up speeches in parliament, or articles in some quarterly review; but one who is ever ready to enlighten his associates by the exercise of his colloquial powers,—one who does not hold his ideas too sacred to be communicated,—one who is prompt to aid in the circulation of the current coin of wisdom, without resting satisfied that in his sullen treasury lie hoarded the ingots of knowledge. It means a man who is a charming companion; a man who talks as

Montaigne writes; a man of whose fluent, easy philosophy one is never weary.

This readiness of speech is perhaps attributable to an irritability of temperament rare in our phlegmatic clime. No one could watch the mutable expression of the beautiful eyes of Eugénie de Nangis, or the rapid variations of her complexion, without discerning that she felt earnestly and thought rapidly: that her sensibility was at least as keen as her intelligence. Still less could a person versed in the mysteries of the female character survey such demonstrations, without feeling that, for her own happiness and the happiness of others, a being thus endowed should have been trained under a very different system from the superficial modes of French education;—that a mind thus organized should have been stored with information, not suffered to grow feeble and inflated by inaction,—in order that, through knowledge of others, it might attain knowledge of itself.

At present, Eugénie's best safeguard consisted in the strongly developed religious feelings

derived from her early habits of life; and in warm affection for her sister. She would not have uttered a word, or hazarded a movement, likely to annoy her beloved Sophie; and the Marquis de Rostanges, as the guardian of that beloved sister's happiness, was the object of her sincere regard. The gentle manners and gentlemanly views of her brother-in-law, rendered him a companion with whom it was difficult to disagree. If neither eminently witty nor wonderfully wise, he possessed that sixth sense of the French,—the tact which constitutes *l'esprit de la conversation;*—and by not swimming beyond his depth, by not trying to talk *too* well, he contrived to converse decently on all subjects of general interest.

Eugénie seldom engaged with him in arguments developing her graver thoughts or opinions. But his society was agreeable to her; that is, till *now* it had always been agreeable. It was not till Lord Greville's arrival, she discovered the tediousness of the thrice-told anecdotes of the courts in which the Marquis had bowed away his days, or the insi-

pidity of the little unmeaning gallantries which garnish the discourse of a highbred Parisian of the old school.

She was now beginning to look forward to Greville's daily visits as a relief. Greville had something to say beyond a recapitulation of the morning paper,—beyond the elegant triviality of Albert de La Roche Aymar, the most assiduous among the frequenters of the house, or the vagaries of their wilder friend, the young Prince de Chaulieu; and even when driven into reserve by the presence of strangers, there was an air of refinement, of distinction, in the English nobleman, imparting grace to his silence.

"I was in hopes, as you are rather later than usual, that Lady Greville might have arrived?"—observed Madame de Rostanges, as Greville entered her drawing room one morning, some ten days after their arrival in Paris.

"I bring my excuse, if not my apology," answered he, depositing, with an embarrassed air, beside the tapestry frame at which the Marquise was working, a bouquet of gardenias, the

perfume of which already scented the apartment. "Mademoiselle de Nangis and yourself expressed last night a passion for Cape jessamines. I have been running the round of all the *bouquetières* in Paris,—from your favourite, Madame Adde, to Madame Lecarpentier, who, *par parenthèse*, is mine,—and ending with Cels and Noisette, at the extremity of the world,—the Boulevart St. Jacques,—the Rue de l'Enfer,—I know not where!—Such is the cause of my delay."

"*Eugénie, ma chère amie!*—come and take your share of these charming gardenias!"—cried Madame de Rostanges, accepting the offering with the ease of a Frenchwoman accustomed to such homage. And she placed one of the flowers in her girdle, while Mademoiselle de Nangis rose from her drawing table beside a window opening into the garden, and advanced to receive her present with a blush at least as guilty as that of Lord Greville.

"How fresh,—how fragrant!"—said she, placing two or three in a crystal cup on the chimneypiece.

"But you ought at least to wear one, in gratitude for the trouble taken by Lord Greville," said Madame de Rostanges, thoughtlessly overlooking the difference of position between them; which, according to the Parisian code, authorized on *her* part the acceptance of an act of gallantry forbidden to her sister.

"I never wear flowers of which the odour is so powerful as to offend many," replied Eugénie. "The Marquis, for instance, has a particular dislike to the scent of the gardenia."

"But Monsieur de Rostanges will be detained all day at the Chambre des Pairs," said Sophie: "and I will take care to have the flowers removed before dinner time. Mine will I dare say be faded before we return from our ride in the Bois. We look to you, Monsieur de Gréville, to be our escort during the absence of the Marquis," she continued, again addressing the Earl. "The Prince de Chaulieu and Monsieur de La Roche Aymar will join us; but the Marquis has so little reliance on their discretion or

my courage, that he begged me not to ride unless you were of the party."

"He could scarcely doubt my being at your service," said Greville, taking his seat beside her, after examining, *en passant*, the progress of Mademoiselle de Nangis's drawing since the preceding day.

"On the contrary, I had a presentiment last night, when you left us after the opera, that you would find on your return home the friends you are expecting; and though I secure our ride by their non-appearance, I am almost disappointed. I want them to arrive soon," said she, little conjecturing to what extent the presence in Paris of Lady Greville might actuate the movements of her son,—"not only because I am sure you are growing impatient, but because our society will be shortly dispersed.—On Monday next will be our last fête of the season."

"The last fête?"

"Have you not received a note from Madame de St. Pierre for your English friend?"—inquired the Marchioness.

"Massingberd has a general invitation, I fancy, to the Duchess's soirées."

"But on Monday next it is not one of her mere receptions,—it is not even a little *soirée dansante*,—it is a ball;—and a ball in the Faubourg in the month of May, is an event! I was really in hopes Lady Greville might arrive in time."

"You do not know my mother," observed Greville, with a smile. "She has not been in a ball room these ten years. But I have some English friends of her party who would be enchanted; and if Madame de St. Pierre will extend her kindness to Massingberd's sister, Lady Cobham, her fête will acquire a very pretty woman instead of a sober dowager!"

"Ah! the lady, then, with whom you were travelling in Italy, is the pretty *Anglaise* with fair ringlets, whom we used to admire at Rome!" cried Madame de Rostanges. "Do you remember her, dear Eugénie?—that fair, delicate creature!"

"I recollect a Lady Cobham at Rome," replied Mademoiselle de Nangis, who, too cour-

the Place Vendome, to wait her ar

"It will be one of the most bril
the year," said Madame de Rostai
back a moment from her work, as
herself with the fragrance of her g
the anticipation of a fête;—"*faubo*
rigorism. The St. Pierre family, yc
at the head of the Carlist set; and,
family connexion, Claire would
allowed to remain on terms of in
such recreants as ourselves."

"But surely this vehement polit
ment is subsiding?"—demanded Gre

"Every year, two or three of
families are won round to the cou
Madame de Rostanges; "either thr
of some regicide attempt, or by s
alliance, or the

those having heavy obligations to the abdicated branch, such as the house of St. Pierre,—still remain true to the cause, or true to their prejudices. I have heard the Princesse de Chaulieu, for instance, assert a thousand times that were Henri Cinq raised to the throne by the aid of the parties now in power, so as to necessitate his adoption of *parvenu* ministers and liberalized opinions, she would never set foot at court. I suspect," she added with a smile, "that such an event as the return of the elder Bourbons from exile, would cause as much embarrassment to their adherents, as the return from the grave of some lamented wife or husband after ten years' interment."

"The Carlists have insensibly adopted manners and habits ill accordant with the demands of a court," observed Mademoiselle de Nangis, gravely.

"Eugénie is one of those who choose to attribute the *sans façon* habits of the Faubourg to want of contact with those thrones and dominions to which every one is obliged to bow the knee," cried Sophie. "Monsieur de Ros-

tanges, and a few others of our society accidentally connected with the court, retain their scrupulous politeness. But you must surely have noticed," she continued, turning towards Lord Greville, "the Anglicized deportment of our young men, compared with the ceremoniousness of the *bureaucratie* and the Chaussée d'Antin?—The *trois saluts d'usage* are abolished, except at the Tuileries and in the diplomatic circles."

"You *are* more English in the Faubourg," replied Greville, replying with a smile to her smiling interrogation. "But I am not disposed to compliment you on the change. In France, the manners of the *ancien régime* appear to me, in place and characteristic. You have adopted our manners, as you have our trial by jury, in the form, not in the spirit. Our contempt of ceremony is not a thing for your climate. Like other exotics, colour and fragrance are wanting."

"The ceremoniousness of the official circles here is simply the result of inequality of condition," interposed Eugénie. "We of the Faubourg set

stand on an equal footing, connected among ourselves, so that a perpetual display of our gentility and knowledge of the forms of good company becomes superfluous."

"Lord Greville will shortly have an opportunity of judging for himself," added the Marchioness; "Madame de St. Pierre's ball on Monday being followed on Tuesday by a breakfast at the Ambassade d'Angleterre; where, as in every foreign circle, all parties, sects, and opinions, are of necessity admitted."

An announcement that their horses were in waiting, suspended the discussion; and a few minutes afterwards, Greville, as he lifted Madame de Rostanges to her saddle, had the gratification of perceiving that the gardenia was transferred to the button-hole of her habit. Albert de La Roche Aymar was already in the act of performing a similar service for Mademoiselle de Nangis; and as the little party emerged from the Rue de Bourgogne to take its way along the *Cours la Reine* towards the Bois de Boulogne, they found the Prince de Chaulieu and his sister Sidonie awaiting them. The

chatting and laughing, along or
evergreen alleys of firs and
avenue of Longchamps not yet
cient shade.

"A fortnight hence, and the
in full beauty!"—observed Eug
commencing a conversation with
accident had attached to her side
of the party. "The spring in I
those of America. We burst at o
and blossom. As yet, we have
ness of the violets and wild ch
the bloom of the blackthorn, to r
Bois. Still, it is more agreeabl
though in fuller foliage, the
renders it in a dry summer—"

She paused,—for she found tha
ing to a disregardful ear. A

toms of restlessness; and Eugénie found her side already deserted. Greville, pressing forward among the bushes, laid his hand on the rein of the Marchioness.

"You forget that you were committed to *my* charge, by Monsieur de Rostanges!"—said he, by way of excuse to Chaulieu for his interference.

"It is too true!" said Sophie, addressing the Prince; "the Marquis is afraid of you, —the Marquis looks upon *you* as a dreadnought. Go to Eugénie, my dear Prince,—go to Eugénie, who has no fears on horseback, and greater skill as a horsewoman.—I feel myself safer with Lord Greville."

Chaulieu, with a significant smile, fell back to the side of Mademoiselle de Nangis.

"See how cavalierly I am dismissed!"—said he, —hoping that the susceptibility of her sex would elicit from Eugénie some comment disadvantageous to Lord Greville, if not to the Marchioness.

"My sister is wise," replied Mademoiselle de Nangis.—"Lord Greville has been accustomed

fected. We and our horses req
education."

"*Mille pardons, Mademoiselle !*—
a better *local !*" cried Achille de
with Lord St. George had just join
"you want turf,—you want enc
carriages,—you want, in short, Hy

"The Bois is good enough fo
Chaulieu, vexed at the arrival of
upon the scene. "I doubt, *mon*
your Hyde Park boasts such a sk
one over our heads;—to say nothin
cert of nightingales greeting us yo
Judæa trees of the gardens of Aute

"Nightingales in Hyde Park !
George, with one of his ineffable sn

"My dear fellow, where have
your life !"—added Cerny, secondi

and bridles, without bringing my manners and opinions from the other side the channel." And forthwith, in order to exemplify their excellence, he drew out his *etui à cigarre*, and by way of rendering himself agreeable to Mademoiselle de Nangis, addressed himself to the enjoyment of "the filthy weed."

Thus doubly deserted, Eugénie was forced to content herself with the society of Cerny and Lord St. George. She would just as soon have been left to the escort of the grooms. —Anxieties and emotions hitherto unknown, were beginning to impart a painful charm to her solitary reflections!—

CHAPTER VIII.

Le tact, c'est le bon goût appliqué à la
bon ton, c'est le bon goût appliqué un maint
(

" No prospect, Mr. Massingber
dear Lady Greville's return to Englan
the lady of Hill Hall to her spous
after a morning drive to the Abbey.
well says that her ladyship's letters
allude to it. She writes constantl
thing is done at the Abbey,—not a t

the country's friend—the reformed parliament, too busy by half!"—interrupted old Massingberd. "Over-legislation is as bad as no legislation at all. Not so much as a cow's tail is allowed to grow in its own way at Greville Abbey. As to that overgrown baby, the Earl, take my word for it now he has slipped his leading-strings, the young chap will give a busy time of it to his mother.—I wish you could see what my son Fred's last letter from Paris says of their escapade from Italy, and the capital fun they contrived to have in Paris, previous to the Countess's arrival."

Mrs. Massingberd wished she *could* see; for Frederick's letters were always carefully locked up from her inspection. From those of Lady Cobham, meanwhile, filled with histories of nursery ailments and squabbles between her maid and her nurses, she gathered only that Lady Greville had been most kind in assisting her to nurse Sir James at Milan, through a fit of the gout; that they were all settled together in the Place Vendome; that they found Paris hot and disagreeable; and that the nurses were

care with which the young Earl
her through the studies of Ro
termined the over-prudent mothe
his departure with Frederick Mas
prolong as much as possible the de
Cobhams at Milan.

"You seem strangely intereste
Cobham should make her appearan
of the Duchesse de St. Pierre?"—sa
ville, after hearing her son exercise
to obtain the consent of Sir James.

"Yes,—I should like her t
was Lord Greville's frank reply.
proud to shew the Faubourg so-
Charming as they are, the Parisia

the infatuation of her son unabated by the month's absence which she had greatly inconvenienced herself to secure, Lady Greville vented her irritation in finding so much fault with poor Julia, that her son felt in gallantry bound to become the champion of a pretty woman thus vehemently attacked. Lady Cobham interested his feelings no more than the plaster-nymph which stood supporting a lamp in the room where they were sitting; yet on hearing her unfairly accused, he began to take her part with a degree of warmth that seemed to justify the suspicions of his mother.

"I foresaw it all!"—was Lady Greville's exclamation, when at length he took his hat and impatiently left the room. "I was sure that his extreme intimacy with young Massingberd boded no good. At Hugo's age, almost every tie of friendship has its origin in some warmer impulse. He was always fond of running over to Hill Hall!—I might have known that there was no great attraction in those tiresome old people; and boy as he was when Julia Massingberd married, no doubt he was secretly attached to her.

[illegible]
[illegible]
appear to [illegible]
while [illegible] a [illegible]
be [illegible] present
will lose sight of Lady C[illegible]
during her stay in [illegible]
and, they will [illegible] at C[illegible]
Hugo remains at the A[illegible]
ball, much as I dislike ente[illegible]
description. I will accept [illegible]
vitation, rather than leave [illegible]
dent young people unrestrai[illegible]
sence!"—

And to the amazement of [illegible]

mused her ladyship, when, on the eventful evening of the fête, Lady Cobham, covered with diamonds, in a white satin dress trimmed with a profusion of artificial flowers, entered the room. "How richly and elegantly dressed! —what lustre diamonds impart to the countenance!" And she scarcely wondered at Lord Greville's desire to exhibit so favourable a specimen of English beauty in that brilliant assemblage.

The Hotel de St. Pierre, enclosed within a spacious courtyard in the Rue de Varennes, and containing on the ground-floor a suite of magnificent apartments, was admirably calculated for a fête. To a vestibule full of antique furniture of richly-carved ebony, succeeded several rooms fitted up in a fantastic style, with old china, paintings, cabinets, and sculpture; ending in a saloon of princely dimensions, the gorgeous gilding of which, intermingled with rich hangings of yellow damask, was lighted on every side by multitudes of candles in lustres of ormoulu, profusely interspersed with crystal drops.

of fine dimensions, opening to illu
dens:—the *parquet* being compo
mosaic of foreign woods beautifully
the orchestra was half hidden in
cess. In all directions, draperies
muslin, or arabesques of the r
tracery, ornamented the walls.
numerable lights, filled up the spa
It was, in short, a Parisian ma
richest style of modern decoration.

With the exception of the att
embassy, the Grevilles and Cobha
only English present; and nothi
more studiously courteous than the r
reception. Scarcely, however, had
ham made her appearance in th
when a murmur of mingled approv
demnation greeted the party.

"*Charmante!—il est à parier que c'est une Anglaise!*" cried the Comte de St. Sévron, one of the *sommités* of the Faubourg.

"*Plutôt une comédienne de province!*" retorted Achille de Cerny. "But no!—she is accompanied by Lord Greville,—she is accompanied by Masanbert!—*C'est quelqu'une de la société.*"

"But what a toilette!" remonstrated one of the *lionnes* most in vogue.

"A satin gown in the month of May!" cried another.

"Diamonds at this time of the year!" added a third.

"And artificial flowers at a summer ball!" exclaimed a fourth.

"Sins of ignorance are always deserving mercy!"—pleaded the Comte de St. Sévron; "*d'autant plus* that this milédi is really a woman of rare loveliness."

"The more the pity that she should be so horribly *fagottée!*" murmured a chorus of *lionnes*.

There was not leisure, however, for circumstantial criticism. Waltzing was the order of the

Lady Cobham, meanwhile, stood l
her husband's arm, à l'Anglaise, as
door as possible, wondering at the
the *valse* and the gay aspect of the s
more particularly at finding the Fren
of whose taste and elegance she had
much, so miserably underdressed.

"Nothing but muslin dresses and
flowers!"—whispered she to Lady G
les lionnes, in their *coëffures* of rose
geraniums, Judæa blossoms, or amarylli
whirled past them rapidly in the dance,
all the fragrance of a moving flower
"Not a single jewel,—not a single ornan

"They look like so many school-mi
dancing-master's ball!" sneered Sir Jam
ham. "How different from our Englis
of rank and fashion!"

ville, approaching them, asked permission to present to Lady Cobham the Comte Tristan de St. Sévron. Her fair face had already begun to extenuate the *bizarrerie* of her toilet; and one after another, the leading *élégants* of the Faubourg solicited from Greville or from her brother an introduction to the charming stranger.

Lady Greville's prognostications seemed on the eve of accomplishment;—Julia was really in danger of becoming *la reine du bal!*—She was solicited to dance,—to approach the refreshment table,—to take a nearer survey of the gardens,—by all that was most fashionable and most *roué* in the French capital! The brow of the dismayed Sir James grew darker and darker. At all times plain and uncouth, his personal attractions were not increased by the emaciation consequent upon his recent fit of the gout; and the pertinacious sullenness with which he mounted guard over his pretty wife excited in no small degree the amusement of the gay coterie. A black speck inserted in the brilliant line of beautiful women extending along the ball-room, was a blemish. It

... ... of a place, or to give his *chaste moitié*, except when entering c the room, was of opinion that Sir Ja not be better placed than by the sid Cobham.

"What a pretty fête!" said the b Julia, having summoned up her best attempt a conversation with her brothe Achille de Cerny, who had plantec before her.

"Better lighted, certainly, than your balls,"—replied Cerny, who affectec mania only where it could give offence,— among his own country-people. "It owned, that the English are not adept art of ball-giving. Their rooms are culated for lighting up. The colour variably too deep,—the furniture too va

trimmed lamps, and as many wax candles stuck crooked by a sulky footman into frightful half-cleaned lustres, replace the forests of bougies which we are careful to place opposite to our pier-glasses, so as to reflect the light."

"And so as to make the room so oppressively hot that there is no breathing,"—abruptly interposed Sir James; whereupon, Monsieur de Cerny honoured the uncouth gentleman with a look of wonder, a low bow, and no further notice.

"An ill-lighted ball-room is the most *manqué* thing on earth!"—resumed Achille. "The first time I went to Almack's, I thought it gloomy as a dungeon; and conceived that the dirty dresses, and faded finery I saw around me, were assumed because it was not worth while to *faire des frais* for a dingy ball, where the most elegant *recherche* would have passed unnoticed. By the time I had been a fortnight in London, I discovered that Almack's was among the best lighted of your balls; and that the *toilettes* which had so much shocked me were considered perfect!"

with a bow of affable amazement.

"The arts of lighting and ventilati
are in their infancy," resumed Achill
addressing himself pointedly to Lad
"I doubt whether the whole Lon
affords a ball so light, so gay, so ai
imagined, as this,—unless indeed in c
of your great houses, whose propri
adopted the habits of the Continent!"

"*Est il impayable!*" exclaimed the
Chaulieu, addressing Madame de l
whom he was leading towards a set
forming. "Is there any man in Pa
Cerny the Anglomane, capable of utte
a speech as that to an *Anglaise?* C
who to *us* is always bepraising the
London!"—

"Let us conclude [illegible]

"Traitress!"—whispered Chaulieu;—"do *you* dare to breathe a word against England,—you, the last *conquête* won from us by our national foe?"

The observation was fortunately lost upon Madame de Rostanges; who, being one of the most exquisite dancers of the Faubourg, was more interested in ascertaining that they had secured a satisfactory *vis-à-vis* for the *contre-danse*, than in listening to the whispers of the Prince de Chaulieu.

"Ah! we have got Claire de St. Pierre and La Roche Aymar!"—said she, eagerly taking her place; "and near an open window too. *Quel bonheur!*"

Greville, meanwhile, who had never in his life been prevailed upon to dance a step, could find no better occupation than to assume beside Lady Cobham the place which Madame de St. Pierre, who had been doing the honours of her ball to the pretty foreigner, had just quitted for the dance. His mother, who was at that moment moving towards the buffet on the arm of the Marquis de Rostanges,

of the various performers in the da
observing.

"Who is that pretty delicate gi
geraniums in her hair?"—asked L

"The Marchioness de Rostang
of the Duchess, and the person th
we were invited here to-night,"
Earl.

"A Marchioness?—a married w
yet so light and lively!—Madame d
too, dances with all the spirit of a gi
poor Lady Cobham; "and yet she
that she is the mother of two childre

"And why not?"—cried Grevill
"a Frenchwoman would never ha
to dance at all, unless she dance
marriage. In this room, there are
unmarried girls, and those chiefly th

"How happy they all look!—What spirits!" said Julia, wistfully, while Sir James Cobham shrugged his shoulders with an air of compassion. He even hinted something of having ordered his carriage early, which Greville readily attributed to the eagerness with which his lady was solicited by a succession of fashionable *valseurs*, to accord them the honour of her hand.

"I never dance," was to *them* a pretext, not an answer. It was of course inconceivable to a Frenchman, that a beautiful woman of one-and-twenty should have renounced the pleasures of the ball-room; and by the time Julia had repeated her "*Je ne danse pas*," for the twentieth time, Achille de Cerny and the rest were beginning to cast significant glances at her companion, as a very happy man. They conceived that it was to enjoy the society of Lord Greville she made the sacrifice of sitting out.

"How exquisitely that Madame de Rostanges dances," she resumed, with genuine admiration. "What ease—what grace—and yet how free from all attempt at display!"

"The Duchesse de St. Pierre, too, is a charming dancer," observed Greville, unwilling to

... strong, in an exercise so
" They are cousins,— there is a slig
blance between them."

" I do not perceive it," replied Juli
" Madame de St. Pierre is a handsor
certainly; but she wants the grace a
of Madame de Rostanges. In *her* the
an air of truth,—such an expression
ness !"—

" Madame de St. Pierre is also very
observed Greville, bending upon his c
looks that conveyed the gratitude he
trust himself to express.

" But she appears so restless,—so ea

" You must make allowance for her
ment, as mistress of the house," replied
wondering that he had hitherto c
Massingberd's sister so vapid and unin

have the honours of a house done to one!" snarled Sir James Cobham, who seemed to be imbibing Achille de Cerny's and Lady Greville's opinion, that the Earl's whispers in the ear of Julia were somewhat close. "It is the surest way of preventing one's feeling oneself at home! A London ball room, where the lady of the house curtsies to one at the door, and takes no further thought of one afterwards, is fifty times pleasanter than all this plaguing people to dance, and hoping they are not incommoded by the air of the door,—just like the civilities with which one is persecuted in our country towns!"

"I confess I am favourably impressed with the courtesies of the French, in their own circles," observed Greville. "After conversing with *them*, the abruptness of the English strikes me as most offensive. There seems to be something wanting; either the real sympathy inducing deference of manner, or the good breeding that assumes its semblance. I trust you are of my opinion?" he continued, again addressing Lady Cobham, with an air of interest. And Julia,

much in good humour with h
party, to be otherwise than acqui

"I am sure I should like Paris
cluding comment. "If I though
agree with the children, I ha
spend next winter here than at M

"Thank you!—we have had
Continent for some time to com
Sir James. "I gave up my hunti
because you fancied that little G
a warm climate. But if you ca
England at Christmas again in a
plain John Bull, thank God!—I
to a taste for French polish!—I n
see my wife capering among a p
mustachioed fellows, nor to cap
men's wives myself! —As I s
am a plain John Bull!"—(Fred

good as to inquire whether she is ready to go home, that I may hasten to inquire after the carriage."

The air of consternation with which his mother stood observing the manifest perturbation of the surly Sir James Cobham, was lost upon Greville, whose eyes were still riveted on the dancers.

"I am quite ready,—we cannot go too soon!" was Lady Greville's reply, seeing in her son's pre-occupation of mind, only a further evidence of his devotion to the pretty, glittering creature beside him. And away they hurried, to look for shawls in the anteroom, leaving Greville at liberty to return and enjoy unmolested the more dangerous pleasures of the evening.

"Farewell till to-morrow!"—was his adieu to Lady Cobham,—as he escorted her to the carriage. And the tone of his voice, modulated by emotions in which she had not the slightest share, did not escape the notice of his anxious parent. All she had noticed at the ball of the Duchesse de St. Pierre, was the attention paid by Hugo to the pretty sister of Frederick Mas-

singberd. Madame de Rostanges and Mademoiselle de Nangis were merely passing shadows in the picture; persons whose destinies lay so widely apart from her own, that she could conceive no common interest likely to bring them into contact. She had scarcely spoken to them; but they were probably too eagerly engaged in the pleasures of the evening to notice her neglect.

Scarcely had the English party quitted the ball, when Madame de Rostanges, on the arm of the Prince de Chaulieu, hastened to remind her husband, now relieved from the charge of Lady Greville, that his health was not sufficiently re-established to admit of his keeping late hours.

"No, no,—a little longer!"—was his considerate reply. "You have had so dull a winter, my poor Sophie, and Eugénie so little dancing, that I cannot hear of your retiring so early. Nay, since you are thus anxious on my account, I will take the carriage and be off. Madame de Chaulieu will bring you home, and Lord Greville will take care of you."

"I was in hopes *that* charge might have been

delegated to me!" said the young Prince, with an air of pique. "Are we to be supplanted everywhere and on all occasions, my dear Marquis, by the handsome foreigner you have brought down upon us?"—

"You know not how heavy my obligations to him, my dear friend!" gravely interposed Rostanges. And Chaulieu,—apprehensive of hearing for the hundred and fourteenth time a recapitulation of the Marquis's hair-breadth escape at the Château de Grangeneuve, with an embellished tribute to the heroism of the young English lord and the excellence of his travelling-carriage,—found it expedient to whisk off Madame de Rostanges into the refreshment room, leaving her husband to pursue his prudent intentions of retreat.

"I am off,—I am hurrying home to bed. Sophie would not hear of my staying, nor I of her curtailing the pleasures of her sister!" cried Rostanges to Lord Greville, whom he encountered in the vestibule, returning from placing Lady Cobham in her carriage. "*You* will take care of them for me?—*Mille remercimens!*—

am convinced there must be a de
dangereux comme le serein !—Veillez
milor !—A revoir."—

It was, perhaps, this prudent w
instigated Lord Greville, on his re
assembly, to beguile Madame de Rc
the gardens of the Hotel St. Pierre !
enchanting scene. Myriads of twir
were interspersed in the overarchi
lime trees; while among the gay p
joining the ball-room, a still m
species of illumination was effected
of portable gas.

" We could not do this in
the month of May," said Greville
duced the Marchioness to rest aw
bench at some distance from the h
venture thus from a heated ball-r

refreshing this tranquil moonlight, after the glare of light within!"

"*Madame votre mère* informed me to-night, that she purposes only a few days' stay in Paris," said Madame de Rostanges, pursuing the train of her own reflexions rather than those of her companion. "Were you prepared for so early a departure? *We* shall remain a fortnight longer. I was in hopes you would be here as long as ourselves!"

Greville was more than in hopes,—he was quite certain. Yet he could not refuse himself the pleasure of being urged to stay by the gentle voice of Madame de Rostanges.

"The Marquis," said she, after a pause, "was so sanguine as to fancy you might even be induced to visit Les Etangs, on your road to England? But this I do not expect,—this I do not desire. Our friend, Monsieur de Cerny, and others of my countrymen who have sojourned at your country-seats, have made me too thoroughly understand the splendour and comfort of the *vie de chateau* in England, to admit of my proposing that you should become

our inmate. Nothing can be more simple, more *mesquin* if you will, than our country life. You would die of ennui,—you would die of disgust—"

"I might die of happiness,—but I know no other danger likely to assail me," said Greville, in a slightly tremulous voice. "You do me injustice if you fancy me wedded to the luxuries of life. A man must be lost indeed to all the better aims—all the higher purposes of existence,—if mere diversion or mere luxuriousness have any real influence over his movements. I trust I have nobler ambitions,—I trust I have dearer aspirations!—"

"By generalizing thus," observed Sophie, with quiet self-possession, "I see you wish to avoid the ungraciousness of a negative. You are determined on departure. You will not remain in Paris till we go to Normandy?"

"I did not conceive the necessity of a direct reply," answered Greville, vexed by her nonchalance. "From the moment you expressed a desire that I should remain, my stay was decided."

"How could I do otherwise than desire you to remain?" remonstrated Madame de Rostanges, somewhat startled by his earnestness. "What would become of our riding-parties were you to leave us?—The Marquis will trust us with no one but *you*,—and is not himself yet strong enough to be our escort. Eugénie's lessons in English, too, would go on but indifferently after your departure. I perceive that she learns more from half an hour's conversation with *you*, than from half a dozen lessons of her masters."

"Then why not allow me to extend my sphere of usefulness by accompanying you to Les Etangs?" demanded Lord Greville, drawing nearer to his companion.

"Because you would be thoroughly out of place among our rough forests and rougher country neighbours," said Madame de Rostanges, laughing. "I wish you could have seen your friend Monsieur de Massinbert's face while I was describing to him our primitive mode of life in Normandy!"

"Wherefore judge my habits and feelings by

those of an accidental companion like Massingberd!"—cried Greville, with indignation.

"Nay, nay!—a *camarade de collège*,—an early friend!" remonstrated Madame de Rostanges.

"Do you imagine," persisted Greville, that because I see you assume the same style of dress as *les lionnes*, I confound you a single moment with the heartless, frivolous, I had almost said worthless, women by whom you are surrounded? Is it because you wear a simple straw bonnet and a *robe en gaine* that you must be a coquette, like Madame de St. Pierre, or an *effrontée* like her friend the Vicomtesse?—No, no!—Trust me I never for a moment mistook your purity of mind,—your childlike simplicity of character. Render me equal justice. Do not pronounce me an effeminate fool or a corrupt libertine, because I happen to belong to a class whose vices and follies are unluckily more ostensible than those of the multitude."

"I will give you credit for every virtue under the sun, if you will speak a little lower and think a little more charitably," mildly remon-

strated Madame de Rostanges. "Above all, do not give me occasion to accuse you of that besetting sin of your countrymen,—*d'être mauvaise langue*. Madame de St. Pierre is my relation,—her friends are my friends. We are at present under her roof,—that is, we ought to be, and are about to be,"—she continued, looking towards the sky and rising from her seat, as if preparing to return to the house. "Do not, because you happen to have been enjoying the society of one of your countrywomen, whose manners are more reserved and whose habits more sober than ours, attribute to mine—(no, not even to *les lionnes*, against whom you seem to entertain a *guignon !*)—motives less pure than those of the decorous Lady Cobham."

Lord Greville started. There was a tone of pique in the insinuation of Madame de Rostanges strangely at variance with her previous *insouciance*. He was about to burst into protestations of indifference and contempt towards Massingberd's sister ; when a moment's consideration,—the fruit perhaps of a month's experience of the corruptions of Parisian life,—determined him to forbear.

she is lovely. As a wife and moth
surly husband and mother to two p
children, Lady Cobham is excellen
praise."

Greville flattered himself at that r
he had achieved a *coup de maitre,* a
sudden eagerness of Madame de F
return towards the house, might be
a feeling of jealousy.

"Eugénie is right!" said she, tak
at the close of his apostrophe; "we
of drawing our deductions of charact
cording to the prejudices of early
Eugénie was saying yesterday that
instance, would never acquire a rea
our society; that the ancient nati
gonism between French and Englis

"Quick—quick!—they are beginning a mazurka, and I have been everywhere in search of you!" cried Albert de La Roche Aymar, offering his arm to the Marchioness, as she attained the parterres adjoining the Hotel.—"Mademoiselle de Nangis began to fear you had returned home with Monsieur de Rostanges."

"I left my sister with Sidonie and the Princesse," said Madame de Rostanges, re-entering the ball-room, eager to enjoy her mazurka with one of the most popular partners of the Faubourg. "I have been quietly seated in the garden, arguing over with Lord Greville the respective merits of our national manners."

"*Toujours ce milor!*"—cried the Prince de Chaulieu, who, standing in the doorway as she passed, overheard the explanation.—"*Celui là nous vengera de son indifférence; mais c'est une vengeance dont je me dispenserais bien!*"

Lord Greville, meanwhile, taking up his usual post of observation beside one of the columns of the dancing gallery, with his eyes fixed upon the picturesque movements of the mazurka, ad-

education.

CHAPTER IX.

Quand on veut plaire dans le monde, il faut se laisser apprendre beaucoup de choses qu'on sait, par des personnes qui les ignorent.

VOLTAIRE.

"THEN what *have* you been seeing and doing, my dear Hugo, during the last three weeks?"—inquired Lady Greville of her son, when he joined her breakfast-table, at the Hotel Bristol, the following morning. "You say you have visited none of the public monuments or institutions?"—

"I am not fond of sight-seeing,—particularly alone,"—said Greville, evasively.

"But the Chambers—surely you must have

Greville, with a sigh. " On suc
am invariably disappointed; and
intend to remain the dupe of my

" How bored you must have f
since you take no interest in al
occupies a stranger in Paris !"—c
Greville, with her inquiring eye
countenance.

" Never, mother, never, I assur
the Earl, with earnestness. " Li
the play—' *J'attendais !*' I knew,
fearing he might have said too
when you and Lady Cobham arri
have full occupation for my leisure.

" Sir James has no thought of p
stay here," said her ladyship, stern
business in town, and talks of l
morrow."

will be a great disappointment to poor Fred Massingberd, who is dying to remain here till after the Chantilly races."

"It would be no great stretch of kindness on your part to remain another week, and give him a place in your carriage to London, as you did to Paris,"—said Lady Greville, busying herself with the egg she was preparing, lest her son should read in her looks the anxiety with which she listened for his reply. "I am strongly inclined to accompany the Cobhams, if you determine to accommodate your friend."

"By Jove,—an excellent idea!"—cried the Earl, overjoyed at the proposal. "After all, as you say, my dear mother, it will disgrace me in England if I return without having visited the Louvre,—the gallery at Versailles,—the Archives,—the,—the everything that a *laquais de place* drags one about to look at!—After all, Fred Massingberd's attachment to the Jockey-Club may prove the means of redeeming my character!"—

"In that case," continued Lady Greville, greatly surprised, and still watching him with

projects to talk over with you, f
my arrival in England."

"I fear I cannot give up the b
Greville. "We have two or three
us, for conversation. It is amazi
may be said by determined talk
mother, in the course of two or thr

"It is something new for *you*
of *fêtes!*"—observed his mother, f

"New, perhaps,—but at *my* a
very unnatural!" replied he, gaily.
I could have almost regretted the
which prevented my joining in
except, indeed," he continued, ap
having given too tangible a clue
ments; "except, indeed, that as
friend Lady Cobham had no bette

some little insight into the mysteries of a French toilet, she would become irresistible."

"I saw no one better dressed, last night!" said Lady Greville, forgetting for a moment her personal antipathies, in the stronger animosity of national jealousy.

"No one more richly dressed, perhaps. But she was the only woman in the room who appeared in a winter costume amid the lightness of the summer season. Here, satins and jewels are abolished after Easter. The French hold that there is reason as well as rhyme in the old song,—describing

Une robe legère
D'une extrême blancheur,
Un chapeau de bergère,
De nos bois une fleur,

as the attributes of summer."

"I no longer wonder, my dear Hugo, that you have not found a moment to visit the Chambers or the Bibliothèque!"—cried Lady Greville, with rising indignation. "Your friend Mr. Massingberd has evidently been introducing you through a course of milliners' shops!"

much occupied with his *jeu de paume*, a
pigeons,—his *stalle d'opéra* and nightly
to take much trouble about the com
my education. But to return to bus
I am not ashamed to own that just
business is pleasure,) let me strongly a
dear mother, not to absent yourself
breakfast. It is the only opport
will have of seeing the notabilities
and——"

"I have as little curiosity on the
you concerning its galleries and ins
was her cold reply. "Make what arr
you choose with Lady Cobham and
not in the habit of being called 'Mis
least, shall form no obstacle to your
ment."

Grieved to perceive that he had an

she might demand, her restoration to a happier mood, when in walked Sir James Cobham, still more out of temper than Lady Greville. His wife had not been ready to breakfast with him,—his wife had never ceased talking of the brilliancy of a Parisian ball,—his wife was anxious to go to the *déjeuner dansant*,—his wife had even ventured to propose the prolongation of their stay in Paris!—He was become a secondary object to her!—The children,—the poor children,—nay, even the head-nurse was overlooked in all this excitement of folly and vanity!—To propose to him to remain in Paris,—to *him*!—in Paris! What was there for a man,—a reasonable man, like himself,—to do in Paris?—How was he to pass his time, while *she* was lounging at Madame Camille's, or flirting with Monsieur le Comte Achille de Cerny?—

No wonder that a man thus injured, should enter Lady Greville's breakfast-room with the scowl of an ogre; and avenge himself by assuming an Englishman's privilege of contradicting every observation addressed to him by the-

Earl, even regarding that open question—the weather!

Lord Greville prognosticated that it would be fine for the breakfast; Sir James was certain it would rain. Lord Greville ventured to persist that it would be fine; Sir James became furiously resolved it should be rain. Lord Greville pointed to the clear blue sky; Sir James swore that it would rain cats and dogs. Lord Greville referred to the barometer; Sir James condescended to quote from Murphy. It was clear that the cross husband was primed for dissension; and his hostess who, five minutes before, had been preparing to quarrel with her son, became now so much alarmed in the supposition that Sir James Cobham's irritability arose from well-founded jealousy of the Earl, that all her care was to conciliate him and get Greville in safety out of the room.

Nothing was easier for her than to give him a commission for a distant part of the town; nothing easier than for the Earl to undertake its execution. No sooner, however, did he escape from the Hotel Bristol, than he assigned

his commission to his *laquais de place*, in order that he might hasten to Madame Adde's, to superintend the composition of two bouquets, to be despatched, for the morning's fête, to the Hotel de Rostanges.

The door of the sweetest of Parisians was already besieged by cabriolets, intent upon a similar errand. Madame Adde (familiarly named by Chaulieu and La Roche Aymar, *la mère des lions*,) was standing perplexed between princes and peers,—roses and jessamine,—defending with loyalty the gardenias bespoken by Lord Greville, and the solitary magnolia belonging *par abonnement* to Frédéric de St. Pierre;—while on the counter, lay garlands for bonnets, *agraffes* for the hair, and bouquets for the hand,—made up with unequalled taste and skill, and about to be sent home to the fairest of *les lionnes*, both of the Faubourg and Chaussée d'Antin. The single flower, the *Succès*,—the *Triomphe*—destined for the button-hole of each correspondent *lion*, was also carefully shaped and prepared;—the *bouquetière* remaining, of course, in proper ignorance of the signals of the tele-

Greville, with his habitual reserve,
the last cabriolet drove from the doo
off enveloped in snow-white paper it
prize, before he attempted to give his

"I have had some difficulty, Mil
may perceive, in keeping these gar
you," said Madame Adde. "On suc
this, every one is wild for the choices
and had not yours been bespoken, I r
realized forty francs by them.—*Voy
bouquets à la main*, you say? Are the
to be equally distributed between the
with what *coëffure* are they to match?

"The gardenias are all to be pla
nosegay," said Lord Greville, asham
himself involved in puerilities which, t
Frenchman, especially if a *lion*, affo

who was now seated in busy activity, sorting her flowers.

"Yes—with that exception, they must be alike."—

"But what am I to substitute for the gardenias?—The nosegay, you perceive, will be composed of roses,—(pompon and thé,)—heliotrope, cactus, fuchsia, —"

"You can let orange-flower correspond with the gardenias," said Greville, not desirous to enter too minutely into these floral emblems.

"It is for a *demoiselle*, then?"—demanded Madame Adde, with a significant smile,—"*a demoiselle Française*, I trust?—You are of course aware, Milor, that with *us* a gift of orange-flowers to an unmarried lady amounts to a proposal of marriage?"—

"Give me myrtle, then, or azorian jessamine, or what you will!" cried Greville, growing impatient,—"only make haste; for I have to convey the bouquets some distance before I return home to dress for the breakfast."

"May I not be permitted to send them, then?" inquired Madame Adde, accustomed to find

herself trusted on such occasions, and to
au fait to all the love affairs of either Fau

" No,—I wish to offer them in person
Greville; and in order to avoid further
tioning, he agreed to return in two mi
prepared to loiter away the interval in
templation of the beauties of the church
Madeleine, opposite to the portico of
stands the diminutive but scarcely less ren
temple of the *bouquetière en vogue.*

To his surprise and vexation, he fou
carriage of the Cobhams stopping at th
opening from the Rue Tronchet to the
leine!—He could do no less than offer hi
to Julia, who was being dragged by her hu
through a round of sight-seeing, (at Lady
ville's instigation,) by way of making h
tired for the breakfast. Then, as if ashar
his ungallant reluctance, he offered her a
tiful Cristata rose which, almost unconsci
he had carried away from the counter of M
Adde.

" Was it Lady Greville who apprized y
my intended visit here?"—demanded Sir J

who could scarcely suppose the arrival of Lord Greville at the church door the result of accident.

"No!—I little expected to meet such agreeable society!" he replied, with what Cobham regarded unparalled audacity. "I have an appointment in the neighbourhood, and am simply idling away the interim."

"We have every reason to feel flattered," sneered Sir James; while poor Julia grew more and more nervous, on finding him so sadly out of sorts.

It could not but occur as a matter of surprise to the *gardien*, standing beside them in his blue uniform and solemn silence, that three well-dressed English persons should come of their own free will to visit the interior of the fine temple of the Madeleine, yet not one of them make a single comment on its beauties, or even deign to pause for the survey!—They stood together, talking in the midst of the church, as though it were the king's highway;—Lord Greville persuading Lady Cobham to go to the dejéuner, and Sir James looking four-and-twenty pounders at the offender.

Little did Madame Adde conjecture when receiving, at the close of her task, the civil thanks and still more acceptable gold of the handsome young Englishman, what perils he had encountered while she was leisurely completing his order.

Meanwhile, the weather, albeit a fête was in progress, fulfilled the auguries of the Earl in preference to those of the grumbling country baronet. The morning was resplendent,—the afternoon beautiful;—a slightly-clouded sky, unaccompanied by a breath of wind, promised all that the most fastidious could desire. It was what the French appropriately call *un temps de demoiselle.*

Already, carriages were crowding towards the Faubourg St. Honoré, where stands the residence of the British Ambassador; of which the hospitalities during the last quarter of a century have exceeded fourfold those of any other household in Paris, during four times the same number of years. The present fête was given to commemorate a royal birthday; and the conservatory surrounding the garden front of the

Hotel, as well as an adjoining temporary room, were ornamented on every side, from floor to ceiling, with the most exquisite flowers. In the grand hall of entrance, the English guests were gratified by the sound of their national anthem, executed by an excellent military band; while, from the dancing-gallery within, resounded the inspiriting orchestra of Tolbecque.

"What delightful weather,—what a charming fête!"—resounded from groups of gaily dressed beauties of all nations, sauntering on the lawn shaded by lofty trees, which slopes from the house towards the Champs Elysées.

"The season could not be more auspiciously concluded than by one of the exquisite entertainments of l'Ambassadrice d'Angleterre!" was no unfrequent exclamation among the French; ever prompt to render justice to the princely manner in which the honours of our country are offered to them by its representatives at the court of France.

"Who on earth are all these strange-looking people?"—demanded Fred Massingberd of Cerny and La Roche Aymar, with whom, among the

latest arrivals, he lounged into the ball-room, trembling lest he should be suspected by the French dandies of any acquaintance with the Ebsworths, Macmichaels, and other obscure English guests assembled by an official fête.

"I should rather inquire of you, since they are your countrypeople!" said La Roche Aymar. "We, however, are wise enough not to expect exclusivism on these occasions. It is not at these general acknowledgments of Foreign office letters, we form our selection of English acquaintances. I think I met you here on Monday night?"—he continued, significantly addressing Massingberd, who, not being included among the personal friends of the Ambassadress, and consequently not invited to her private parties, found it convenient just then to swear at the infernal noise of the *cornet à piston*, instead of replying to the question.

"Where is Greville this morning?"—resumed La Roche Aymar, good-naturedly dropping the subject for one more acceptable.

"Greville?—oh! Grev is re-installed under petticoat government," cried the dandy. "Grev,

you know, is hag-ridden by a despot of a mother, who, for the next three years don't allow him to call his soul or his estate his own."

"He seems, nevertheless, to do and to spend pretty much what he pleases," observed La Roche Aymar, with whom, as with most foreigners, parental authority was sacred.

"Lady Greville is only just arrived in Paris," said Massingberd, in explanation.

"*Une femme présentable?*" — demanded La Roche Aymar.

"You saw her last night at Madame de St Pierre's."

"Dragonizing that pretty Madame de Cobham, who seemed sinking under the weight of her dulness and her diamonds?"—

"Precisely."

"*Une femme charmante,—d'un ton parfaitement comme il faut!*"—replied La Roche Aymar, to the great surprise of the St. James's Street dandy, unaccustomed to consider a woman a human being, after forty; or to imagine that the word *charmante* could be applied to appropriateness of dress and deportment, as well as to the attractions of youth and beauty.

as a mystification,—"do you *really* imagine that Greville is attracted to the Rue St. Dominique by the black eyes of Eugénie de Nangis?"—

"I imagine that he is invited there out of deference to his forty thousand a year. *Un million de rentes, mon cher, ne nuit à rien.* Greville is completely at home among them. You talk of his being received in this house as *l'enfant de la maison;* he is fifty times more cordially welcomed by old Rostanges and his wife!"

Albert could scarcely repress a smile. He resolved to inflict upon Fred Massingberd, as a punishment for his stupidity, the narrative of the burning of the Château de Grangeneuve, so often recounted to him by the Marquis. But Fred stopped him in the outset.

"My dear fellow,—I know all that!—I was there!—I was the first person who discovered the fire. But they never invite *me* to dinner—they don't ask *me* to accompany them into Normandy!"—

"Did you venture up a rickety ladder, pray, to snatch the poor asthmatic Marquis out of the

flames?" inquired Albert, smiling at his irritation.

"Not I!—I hope I am not such an ass!—But rely upon it, that if I had, it would have been long enough before they attempted to entangle *me* in an engagement with Mademoiselle de Nangis."

"I suspect, however, that your fortunes are far better assorted with hers, than those of your friend," observed Albert, unable to suppose a marriage formed on any other basis than parity of means. "Mademoiselle de Nangis has not more than five-and-twenty thousand francs income, which is, I think, somewhat about what you told me your father allowed you,—a thousand pounds sterling a year."

Again Fred Massingberd, unable to confirm, saw fit to turn a deaf ear to the interrogation. He was surprised, however, to find the black-eyed damsel in question so well endowed. Unaccustomed to the equal distribution of fortunes in French families, he had expected that five or ten thousand pounds formed the utmost of her dowry. For a moment, he began to ask

himself whether she might not be worthy his own consideration.

"Lady Greville would move heaven and earth rather than consent to her son's marriage with a foreigner," said he, by way of dispatching an intimation through La Roche Aymar to the Rostanges family; "and she has at present unqualified power over his fortunes. She might make him a ward in Chancery,—she might curtail his allowance,—she might ——"

"She might satisfy herself, had she honoured the ambassadress with her company," interrupted Albert,—drawing Massingberd into the gardens, and pointing out the object of their discussion seated under the overhanging branches of a beautiful hawthorn, by the side of Madame de Rostanges,—"that her son is at present in no *very* great peril of holy matrimony."

Blushing for the morality of his previous inferences, Fred Massingberd affected to laugh off the affair as a jest. He was really ashamed of his credulity; but in spite of his own deeply ingrained *rouerie*, there was something in the almost feminine purity of Greville's character,

which had hitherto prevented his attributing to the attractions of the married sister, the *dévouement* of his friend.

"When are we likely to hear news of breakfast?"—said Albert, addressing the Comte de St. Sévron, who was also intently watching the tête-à-tête between Greville and Madame de Rostanges.

"Not yet, I trust!—The day is so charming, that I am in no hurry to quit this exquisite *pelouse* for a stuffy *salle à manger*,—even at the invitation of a *suprême de volaille!*"—replied the Count,—one of the most polished epicureans of the Carlist set.

"But one can enjoy nothing in the midst of this *cohue!*"—drawled Massingberd, glancing contemptuously towards a group of singularly beautiful but singularly ill-dressed English girls, of whom he dreaded being supposed an acquaintance.

"Pardon me,—the *cohue* itself charms me!" interposed the cool St. Sévron, who held in abhorrence the slang and affectation of the would-be fine young English gentleman. "I adore

new faces, particularly when so lovely as those we look on."

"But what a different set of people one saw last night at Madame de St. Pierre's!"—persisted Fred, with a contemptuous smile.

"Different indeed! But as Madame de St. Pierre's *salle de bal* contained only those whom I have met in every *salle de bal* since January, it is a relief to see something new."

"I should have thought that there were persons here, however, my dear Count," said La Roche Aymar, joining in the conversation, and looking towards the pretty but vulgar wife of one of the cabinet ministers, "with whom you were not particularly pleased to find yourself in contact."

"*Mon cher Albert!*—for what do you take me?"—replied the philosophical St. Sévron. "I may oppose a man in the Chamber, or object to receive him at my table, whom I am as well content to meet at an assembly, especially a diplomatic one, (which is scarcely accountable for its constituents,) as if walking on the Boulevarts or in the *foyer* of the opera."

"Still I confess I have no taste for running my head against persons whose names are so unsatisfactorily known to me in their public capacity," resumed La Roche Aymar.

"Or against the ill-bred noisy clique of the Chaussée d'Antin," added Fred Massingberd, directing his sneers against a group of very pretty women in a somewhat peculiar costume. "*Voilà, je crois, la compagnie des lionnes.*"

"Fie on such sweeping clauses!"—interrupted St. Sévron. "Nothing so unfair as to attempt to damn by an epithet, or so absurd as to classify men or women, as you would vegetables or fossils. Of those to whom Monsieur de Masanbert is alluding, no two are the least alike in character or pursuits. *L'esprit de coterie* engendered by our weekly receptions, naturally produces intimacy and similarity of dress and manners, among persons frequently re-united. But it is cruel to opprobriate them with a collective name, which is sure to render the class thus distinguished unpopular and ridiculous."

"I am beginning to suspect *you* of lionism, *mon cher St. Sévron!*"—cried Albert de La Roche

Aymar, apprehensive that the English dandy might fancy himself preached at. "With whom are you *accouplé*, pray?—Is your *lionne* a smoker of cigars or papelitos?—Does she sup *au cabaret* with you, or only dine?—Do you pass your evenings with her at the concert of the Chalet, or stick to the publicity of Franconi's?"—

"Depend upon it, he sticks at nothing!" cried Massingberd, delighted at this mystification of the man he wanted courage to attack.

"You do me too much honour," observed St. Sévron, in his former dry tone. "The only woman in Paris for whose bright eyes I feel disposed to play the fool, has never been promoted even by the most mischievous of the silly old women by whom such scandals are easily concocted, to the distinction of being a *lionne*. The sole fault of which I ever heard her accused, and that but recently, (*Monsieur de Masanbert daignera me pardonner!*—) is that of a too partial Anglomania."

"Madame de Rostanges for a thousand,—" cried Fred and La Roche Aymar at the same moment. But all further observation was

checked on perceiving that their exclamation had caught the ear of Mademoiselle de Nangis; who, leaning on the arm of her brother-in-law, with her dark eyes full of mournful earnestness, stood in silent contemplation of the scene.

At that moment, the well-known national air, which forms for many the *chef d'œuvre* of the *ars musica*,—

Oh! the roast beef of old England!

resounded on the lawn. Every one began instantly to hurry through the conservatories towards the gallery; where, amid embowering orange-trees, was served a magnificent banquet.

"Let us wait for Sophie!" said Mademoiselle de Nangis, detaining the Marquis, while Albert the Parisian Lucullus, and Fred the Epicurus of St. James's Street, pressed past them, with more eagerness than gallantry, to the feast.

"No, no!—Lord Greville will take the best care of her; she is safe and happy with Greville!" replied Monsieur de Rostanges, urging her on,—"*Depêchons nous*, or I cannot answer, my dear Eugénie, for finding you a place."

Monsieur de St. Sévron, however, remained stationary, till the pink hawthorn tree yielded up the occupants of the bench almost hidden under its drooping branches; and when, by the interest of Lord Greville, a small table was apportioned to Madame de Rostanges in a nook surrounded by orange trees, the Count gliding silently in, possessed himself of a vacant place by her side.

"*Où il y a manger pour deux, il y a manger pour trois!*"—said he, quietly unfolding his napkin. "I congratulate myself, *chère Marquise*, on the chance which has procured me a position so envied.—*Dieu! que nous sommes bien ici!*—Monsieur de Grévile! they are inquiring whether you take soup."—

CHAPTER X.

La société est composée de deux classes
plus de dîners que d'appétit, et ceux qui ont
que de dîners. Il s'agit de la prémière.

L'Abbé

It is scarcely to be supposed th
the world, a man of the Parisian wo
the Comte Tristan de St. Sévron,
made so open a demonstration in f
Marquise de Rostanges, had his sent
of the nature inferred by Massingt
companion.

spiring him with honest satisfaction when he found that his presence, instead of being resented by the Marchioness, was hailed as an acquisition.

St. Sévron, though an epicurean in his philosophy, was a man of the nicest honour and most amiable disposition. Clever, caustic, but restraining his sallies by the tact of sound good sense, it had long been his ambition to obtain the hand of the charming sister-in-law of his friend and country neighbour the Marquis de Rostanges. But Eugénie gave no encouragement to his suit,—no indication of relenting in his favour. Rostanges could make nothing of the affair. He, who at sixty years of age was happy in the affections of a wife of twenty, could scarcely credit the assertion of St. Sévron that Mademoiselle de Nangis, at seventeen, considered a man of forty too old for her. But he was forced to admit that he foresaw no chance of a change in her decision against his friend.

But although thus baffled in his purpose, St. Sévron was not to be shaken in his attachment. He loved the beautiful and gifted

Nangis to excite anxiety on her
her charms and talents to comma
He feared that her destiny m
stormy one. He foresaw that sh
to be happy; and though *his* ha
matter of avowed indifference t
that, whatever the fortunes of E
if affianced to another,—even if t
other,—she must still remain an c
mount interest to himself.

His intimacy with the family fc
abled him to attain some insight
gagements. At Les Etangs, he wa
the summer a welcome guest,—in
frequented the same society; and
journey to Italy was an unexpec
had the happiness of welcoming
free, and beautiful and captivati-

Hotel de Rostanges, was there as the accepted lover of Eugénie, excited his serious alarm. But even love could not blind the clear perceptions of St. Sévron. He soon discerned the truth; and the truth inflicted almost as much pain as his original supposition, for he saw in it a source of shame and disquietude for her he loved. The happiness of Eugénie was bound up in the well-being of her sister; and he consequently beheld in the attentions of the handsome young English lord all that was most to be dreaded for the peace of the family.

Such was St. Sévron's motive for affecting a tender interest for the fair Sophie, in presence of those who, he knew, would not venture to breathe dishonouring rumours concerning a woman distinguished by his affection. Familiar, *too* familiar, with the habits of the loungers of the clubs, he dreaded lest they should acquire the habit of coupling together the names of Greville and Madame de Rostanges. He knew that a stain of this description once incurred, is never effaced; and that the scandal could not fail to reach in time the ears of the

that *frenquet* of an Englishman, w
say a syllable against a woman dea
high in authority as myself among t
of dandyism!"—was his secret reflec
the scene upon the lawn. "I must r
this young fellow from pursuing his
over the good and guileless Soph
idlers here from noticing his indis
tion." And with this view, he took t
seat by her side.

"Where have my sister and
placed themselves?" was Madame de
first inquiry of St. Sévron, whose
Eugénie, and friendship with h
seemed to place him almost on th
relation. "I lost sight of them
we entered the gardens."

"They did not lose sight of *you*,

"Then why not wait and accompany us in to breakfast?—I am convinced they have not found so eligible a place as this!"—cried Madame de Rostanges.

"Mademoiselle de Nangis is with Madame de St. Pierre, and Rostanges at no great distance," replied the Count, addressing this piece of information ostensibly to the lady, in reality to Lord Greville. "But since they have deserted us, let us forget them! and drown our sense of ill-usage in a glass of sherry,"—he continued, now pointedly addressing the Earl. "Here, in the head-quarters of Anglicism, one may venture on such a potation."

Lord Greville could not refuse. But he bowed with a countenance worthy of Sir James Cobham; nor was it till nearly half an hour had elapsed, that St. Sévron's easy flow of conversation, called forth into unusual vivacity by the unfeigned pleasure taken by Madame de Rostanges in his society, succeeded in conquering his ill-humour.

"I entreat you, do not believe half that Monsieur de St. Sévron will tell you about

us!" cried she, addressing Greville, at the close of one of the Count's ironical sallies against the Faubourg. "He is always devising treasons against the fair fame of the society of Paris."

"Pardon me,—I have the greatest respect for the society of Paris,"—replied St. Sévron, gravely. "The only fault I find with it is that it does not sufficiently respect *itself*. Free trade is a fine thing; but we really sell ourselves *too* cheap. No people on earth are to be had on such easy terms."

"Yet the other day you were protesting that, since the Madeleine seemed so much to seek in a divinity for its shrines, (having been successively destined to become an opera-house,—a temple of glory,—and a Christian church,) we could not do better than dedicate it to the worship of the golden calf,—the reigning idol of the nation."

"I think so still, my dear Marquise,—I think so still!"—cried St. Sévron. "Even you, by right of sex an opponent of all rational propositions, will allow that gold rules the court, the camp, the grove, from one end of our city

to the other. Ask yourself, for instance,—and to yourself at least be candid in reply,—to whom the lowest of Madame de St. Pierre's curtsies were last night addressed!—To names renowned in history,—to names illustrated by living talent, or eminent merit?—No, no!—The place of honour is assigned among us to wealthy foreigners,—to people who have bought their way into our society,—whose fortunes like mushrooms, sprang from the dirtiest origin,—and whose——"

"You forget that you are talking in presence of a wealthy foreigner,"—interrupted Madame de Rostanges, blushing deeply.

"Of course I do; for howbeit unskilled in English history, ancient or modern, I know just enough to class Lord Greville among those illustrated by the records of past centuries as well as by merits of his own," said St. Sévron, courteously. "Moreover, lady fair, your evasion shews consciousness of guilt. You know full well that I allude only to those resident foreigners, who dazzle us with their fêtes and tyrannize over us by their impertinence."

"I admit that well-directed hospitality (admire the cunning of the phrase!) is not without its influence among us," replied the Marquise; "especially if exercised by pretty women, or men of gentlemanly address. But let no foreign adventurer thence imply that we are to be purchased by gold by itself, gold. *Mere* money will not suffice."—

"It must be of a different complexion from any I have seen offered as a bribe to the door-keepers of *la bonne campagnie*, if it meet with rejection!"—cried Monsieur de St. Sévron. "Perhaps we are right. We are a nation in modest circumstances. Paris has too much gilding and *or moulu*, and too many fine ladies, to admit of the cultivation of Spartan virtue."

"The black broth would scarcely, I fear, go down after this excellent *potage à la Reine*," observed Lord Greville.

"Let the world swallow its *potage à la Reine*, and welcome," cried St. Sévron;—"nay, let it say grace afterwards to its divinity, the golden calf,—but not pretend meanwhile to maintain a purer worship!"—

"Hypocrisy is said to be the homage rendered by vice to virtue," persisted Greville, amused by his earnestness.

"Like other tribute money, then, it should bear the image and superscription of its Cæsar!" —cried St. Sévron. "Admire, I beseech you, the outcry raised among us against the absence of blood and birth, in persons recently raised to public distinction by their energy and talent; (I may differ from them in principle, but I admit their energy and talent;) while in these foreign *millionnaires*, whose sole merit consists in their credit with Rothschild, the self-same sins of pedigree, nay, blemishes still more flagrant, are boldly winked at!"—

"Did I not tell you *qu'il cassait les vitres à tout le monde?*"—cried Madame de Rostanges. "To look at Monsieur de St. Sévron, *who* would imagine that his quiet manners and *petite voix flutée* were conveying such bitter truths!"

"'*La raison, avec son petit filet de voix!*'" said Lord Greville, quoting from Molière. "Monsieur de St. Sévron would find very different grounds for his diatribes in my own country. We English, though reviled by the

Continent as a nation of shopkeepers, are, next to the Americans, the most infatuated worshippers on earth of rank and titles."

"I *have* heard you taxed with love of titularity," answered the Count, pleased to find him relaxing in his reserve. "But I never knew you accused of selling your good word for thirty pieces of silver."

"Because money is a drug among us," replied the Earl. "Higher importance is attached to aristocratic distinction."

"Perhaps because aristocratic distinction is conceded by your government to the claims of merit," said St. Sévron, courteously. "Your legists, your statesmen, your warriors,—"

"Are ennobled it is true,—but it is only in their posterity their ennoblement is honoured," rejoined Greville. "It reflects little credit upon our national feeling, that a man of humble origin attaining chivalric distinctions, is pursued his whole life long with covert insults; while his children, devoid perhaps of all that raised him to the peerage, are in the next generation hailed as of noble birth."

"Well, well!—Rochefoucault swears that we

derive comfort from the misfortunes of our neighbours; and I own it affords me consolation to hear of their follies!" cried St. Sévron. "I had thought you a wiser people, my dear lord. I fancied that Bacon yesterday, and Brougham to-day—"

"Brougham?" interrupted Greville, with a smile.

"Lyndhurst then, if you like it better. By your adoption in the Faubourg, I infer you to be a Conservative?"—

"A Whig, according to the interpretation of the last century, which implies a Tory in the parlance of the present," replied Lord Greville. "I have, however, at present, no right to call myself anything. Deeds, not words, constitute the politician; and I have not yet claimed an existence for myself within the walls of parliament."

The Comte de St. Sévron, accustomed to the proscription which closes the French chamber against the political aspirant till the age of thirty, and to the national jactancy which renders the embryo Sullys and Colberts awaiting their ad-

" In our country," he replied, " v
than deeds, seem to constitute tl
You will hear us talk codes, protoc
from the throne,—we are never sil
till our opinion is asked by the cc
one of us but knows everything!—
der, (who stands wondering at your
my prose,) because admitted into
stables of the prince royal, affects
you with the most secret mysteries
cabinet—*comme si on connaissait le p*
avoir visité les latrines!—While our
Aymar, because he reads the Cha
himself intitled to accuse of crime
galleys, a minister who, if a villan
and vulgar fellow, is a highly ami
man whose kindness of heart equal
ness of his head."

office of Monsieur de Rostanges to lead you to the foot of the throne."

"That would scarcely demonstrate my liberalism!" cried St. Sévron, laughing. "I look upon Louis Philippe as the leading conservative of Europe. Louis Philippe, if not my lawful sovereign, is at least the head of my party. It seems the property of a gilded *fauteuil* overhung by a regal canopy, to communicate the true monarchical feeling. As the tripod inspired the Pythoness, the throne inspires autocratism. Don't talk to me of your constitutional governments! The English, (as one of our wise ones says,) the English are the only people under the sun who have discovered the art of limiting the powers of a man whose face figures upon half-a-crown—"

"And consequently, under a whole one," added Madame de Rostanges, laughing.

"I have as little doubt that Louis Philippe, Duke of Orleans, was a liberal, as that Louis Philippe, King of France, has become a conservative," observed Lord Greville. "Expe-

rience, which enlightens individuals, is said to darken the minds of princes; but as kings, like the engine-drivers on a railway, are the first to suffer by any rash acceleration of speed, —we cannot wonder that they look anxiously to the safety-valve."

"Moving already?"—cried the Comte de St. Sévron to Madame de Rostanges. "I fear we have frightened you away by the gravity of our discussions?"—

"On the contrary, you have almost made me overlook the fact that I have not only finished breakfast these five minutes, but that I am nearly the last lady in the room!" she replied, peeping through the branches of the orange trees towards the gallery, now almost exclusively filled with Englishmen, lingering over their wine after the French cavaliers had hurried towards the dancing-room.

Little did Sophie conjecture, as she inquired of Lord Greville on whose arm she now followed the throng, whether he did not find Monsieur de St. Sévron very agreeable, that

the sole object of his chattiness at table was to prevent a more intimate conversation between herself and her companion. But he had succeeded. All hope of such an enjoyment was at an end. Greville had already noticed with wonder, the familiarity existing between Frenchwomen of the same set, — a sort of girlish *camaraderie de convent* which would be held unmatronly among his own countrywomen. Mademoiselle de Nangis and Sidonie de Chaulieu might have been excused, he thought, for giggling together concerning the delinquencies of their mantuamakers or partners, their saddle-horses or lapdogs. But Eugénie and her friend were still subjected to the demureness of French young ladyism; and it was the Duchesse de St. Pierre, the Comtesse Jules de la Roche Aymar, and others of the *lionne* tribe, who now crowded round Madame de Rostanges, besetting her with idle questions or stories without an end, setting at nought that important branch of eloquence, *l'art de la parenthèse.*

"What an exquisite bouquet!" cried Madame de St. Pierre, suddenly seizing and ex-

amining the nosegay of her cousin, as they all stood together at the extremity of the lawn, over which the shades of a delicious summer twilight were now gathering. "Madame Adde, I perceive!—*Mais depuis quelque temps ma chère tu donnes terriblement dans les gardénias?—Cette bonne Madame Adde prétend même que tu en as fait hausser le prix courant!*"

"Yes,—Eugénie and I are passionately fond of them," replied Madame de Rostanges.

"But I did not perceive any in your sister's bouquet?"—observed the provoking Madame de St. Pierre.

"She had perhaps removed them, knowing that the Marquis dislikes their scent," replied Sophie, who had not noticed any difference between the two bouquets presented by Lord Greville. Yet Greville, who, though engaged in conversation with Madame de la Roche Aymar heard every word that was passing, flattered himself the evasion was intentional, and that a secret understanding existed between himself and the pure-minded Sophie!

He was startled, however, to perceive that his

attentions had excited the notice of Madame de St. Pierre,—a woman who, though correct in her conduct, or perhaps, under cover of that very virtue, permitted herself unlimited licence of speech. Greville felt assured that the young Duchesse would rejoice in an opportunity of opening upon her gentler cousin a battery of raillery, in return for the remonstrances of Madame de Rostanges touching her own wild feats of smoking cigars in the Bois de Boulogne, winning wagers of Albert de la Roche Aymar by leaping its fences, and other extravagances of a similar kind.

He felt that he must keep watch over himself. His dearest hopes would be frustrated if any imprudence on his own part, any ill-nature on that of the world, should interfere with his visit to Normandy. At present, the invitation had not been so seriously given by the Marquis as to constitute an engagement. He resolved, therefore, instead of lingering by the side of Madame de Rostanges through the evening, to bestow his attentions elsewhere.

But in what quarter?—With all others than

Eugénie and her sister, his habitual shyness still prevailed. He had been at no pains to extend his intimacies in Paris. The vivacity of *les lionnes* overpowered,—the affectation of *les lions* disgusted him. In the one besetting interest, all others had been neglected. The stars of the diplomatic galaxy shone in vain before him;—the official authorities stood conversing in groups which he had no sanction to join. He had sought introductions to no one; beguiled by the charm of female society into sauntering away his hours in a city wherein are concentrated such active impulses of human intelligence.

"Here comes your Mephistopheles!"—whispered Monsieur de St. Sévron, beside whom he found himself standing at the end of the gallery, now lighted up for the evening, and crowded with dancers.

"My Mephistopheles?"—reiterated Lord Greville, looking inquiringly round, as if for an explanation.

"You need not glance so suspiciously towards poor Espérance!" cried the Count, laughing. "Do not fall into the vulgar error of fancying

that the tempter of our times must needs be old. Had Mephistophiles really worn the impish countenance assigned him by the piquant *burin* of Retsch, do you think a clever fellow like Faust would have fallen into his toils?—No, no!—the wolf in sheep's clothing of the old fable is still the most fatal of all *loupgaroux;* and the devil of to-day is consequently a devilish good fellow,—his hairy tail coiled up under a coat made by Blin, and his cloven feet concealed in pumps resplendent with patent varnish.—*Le voilà!*"—he continued, pointing to Fred Massingberd, who was just then approaching, with Lady Cobham on his arm.—"As I told you, here comes your Mephistophiles!"—

"And my Margaret?"—inquired Lord Greville, with a smile.—

"I am not so sure," replied St. Sévron.—"She looks, however, innocent enough to be a temptress!"

"Innocent, indeed!"—murmured Greville, shrugging his shoulders as he recalled to mind the inanity of poor Julia's conversation. At

that moment, nevertheless, he felt her arrival be a relief.

"I understood that, on account of yo journey, you had renounced all thoughts coming here?" said Greville, hastening forw to accost her.

"We do not go to-morrow. There was so mistake about the passport; and Sir James co ceived that under such circumstances, ou absence from the fête of our Ambassador m be considered extraordinary. It was too late when the discovery was made, to come to th breakfast. Lady Greville, indeed, tried to pe suade us it was scarcely worth while to co to the ball; and I am so tired with the ple sures of last night, and the plague of si seeing of this morning, as to be quite of opinion. I told Sir James so,—but he wo insist upon my coming!"

Recollecting his contradictions of the mo ing, Lord Greville could readily understand arbitrary exercise of authority on the part of country baronet.

"Cobham accompanied you, at least?"—he inquired, with an air of becoming interest.

"Accompanied her?"—cried Massingberd, with a look of pity. "I should think so!—Pray when did you ever see a pair of English turtles fly fifty yards apart?—Luckily for their reputation, however, I was near the door when they entered; and undertook the task *de conduire Madame* into the ball-room. And now, I wish to heavens you would let me make her over to *you*, Grev, my boy!—I saw whist tables in the small drawing-room, as we passed through; and as you are not a dancing man,—"

"No need, surely, of an apology!" cried Greville, gallantly offering his arm to Julia, who accepted it with smiling apathy; and it was no small satisfaction to find occupation as the cavalier of a fair one for whose entertainment it was unnecessary to exercise any excess of intellectual effort.

Lord Greville commenced his duties in the truly English fashion of disturbing all the arrangements of the ball-room, by conducting Lady Cobham through the crowd of dancers

from one extremity of the gallery to the
as if in search of a seat; but in reality, th
might enjoy the pleasure of staring and
stared at. Great indeed was the adm
she excited.

Poor Julia, however, was in no mood
preciate her triumph. She had been scol
the morning by her husband, and harass
the evening by her nurses; receiving hint
the one that she was an indifferent wif
from the other that she was an indi
mother; and while the tribe of Ebsw
Macmichaels, and other English misses, th
her a very happy woman to be Lady Cc
to possess such quantities of diamonds, a
escort of a handsome young lord, Julia
sidered herself only so far fortunate th
headache and heartache did not relieve
selves in a burst of tears.

"I am sadly afraid Lord Greville is a
ful flirt!"—whispered one of the elderly sp
daughters of the Marquis of Droneham,
Maria Dronely, to her sister Lady Ja
they sat partnerless, primly intent upo

ball. "We must be careful not to say anything about it to his mother; but I watched him hid all dinner-time in a corner among the orange trees, with a very pretty Frenchwoman, (who, no doubt, was like all Frenchwomen, no better than she should be.) And now, just look at him, whispering to Lady Cobham!—I don't say that there is any positive harm in Lady Cobham, but she is a very giddy young person!"

"Giddy, indeed!" — retorted Lady Jane, shaking her head. "What is she doing here at all?— Lady Greville would not hear of coming!—They are all to start for England in the morning, and are to make only a day on the road."

"A day on the road?—and with two ailing children?—You may well call her giddy!" retorted Lady Maria, though she knew that poor Julia, from the hour of her marriage, had never exercised a choice in the smallest of her domestic arrangements. "There, my dear, just look at them!—*Poor* Sir James!"—

"How shameful of that young coxcomb of a

Mr. Massingberd, not to take better care of his sister," said Lady Jane. "Husbands are proverbially blind,—but the brother *must* see what is going on."

"He sees nothing but his cards, my dear!—I left him just now, as usual, betting away at whist."

"I declare I should not be surprised if they were going to dance!" whispered Lady Maria, as if announcing an act of the greatest turpitude. "Lady Cobham, with *her* young family, dancing!—waltzing, perhaps!—Good heavens!—what a pity that Sir James Cobham is not aware of what is going on!"—

"I don't think they are going to dance," observed Lady Jane, in the same mysterious whisper, "because I remember that at Naples, Lady Greville wished her son to ask *me* at that last Accademia ball, and he excused himself as not knowing the figures of a quadrille."

"Ah! my dear!—Consider what he has been through *since*, poor young man; a month at Paris with that libertine Mr. Massingberd. Depend on it he knows how to waltz, and every

thing else that is bad, by this time. Lady Greville is likely to have a sad time of it!"

"Well, there *is* some *little* excuse to be made for him," sighed Lady Jane, in a sentimental tone. "He is the handsomest man in the room, the handsomest man, *I* think, I ever saw. And, after all, young men *will* be young men!—"

Considering that, in their own case, old women chose to be young ones, this was not allowing much.

"Surely," cried Lady Maria, in pretended consternation, "Surely, my dear, that is Sir James Cobham peeping in through the conservatory door, near the orchestra?"—

"To be sure it is,—and with a face as black as thunder!" cried her sister. "I sincerely hope he wont happen to see them. Only look at them now,—chatting and whispering together with the utmost unconcern."

"Ah! poor young creature!—I feel for her parents," ejaculated Lady Maria. "Mrs. Massingberd, though rather tiresome, is an excellent woman, and the father a most inoffensive man. Do you see Sir James Cobham still, my dear Jane?"

"No, my dear; he has disappeared.] perhaps coming round through the conserv to pounce upon them. I am afraid he hardly get through that phalanx of Fr women at the upper door. How stupid it people to stand encumbering doorways in sort of way.—Ah! there he is again.—See he is trying to make his way!- But it won —Nothing so disobliging as the French, for a person in their own set.—The *lionn* all gossipping together in a mass, you see don't pay the smallest attention to Sir Cobham!"—

"Who would, that could help it!" was tl voluntary rejoinder of Lady Maria. "*very* hot and cross he looks.—Ah! now scene!—He has got into the room at last, what has become of his wife and Lord ville?"—

"They must have glided through the da and made their way out through the t room!" cried Lady Jane. "What cunnir Sir James may be an hour now without disc ing them!—There are so many ins and and short cuts in this house, to say nothi

the gardens, that I defy you to find anybody who does not wish to be found."

"It would really be a mercy to that poor young creature if we were to give him a hint which way she is gone!" said Lady Maria, in a hypocritical whine.

"It certainly would be the best thing for *her*. But if he were to call out Lord Greville,—think of poor dear Lady Greville!—At all events, let us follow, and see the end of it.—What a shocking affair!—Foreign example, eh?—See the result of coming abroad!"

Thus trivial is the origin of half the idle scandals current in society!—But does not the arrow conveying danger and death derive its mischief from two worthless feathers?—

CHAPTER XI.

Il y a dans le cerveau des femmes une case de moi
dans leur cœur un fibre de plus que chez les hommes.
CHAMPFO

On the following day, as on the day succ
ing any fête of considerable magnitude, not
was talked of in Paris but the details of the
quisite déjeuner of l'ambassadrice d'Anglet
All those who were present protested, an
those who were less fortunate admitted on
shewing, that never had there been an enter
ment so unexceptionable.

"*Je ne sais pas. Il me semble qu'il y man
quelque chose!*" observed Madame Jules d

Roche Aymar, who happened to form one of a numerous circle sitting in judgment upon the affair, in the salon of the Hotel de Rostanges.

"And what, I beseech you?"—cried her husband. "*Que diable! Il y avait des petits pois tant qu'on en voulait;*—there were strawberries, pine-apples, and—"

"*Il me semble pourtant qu'il y manquait quelque chose!*"—persisted Madame Jules, glancing at Madame de Rostanges, beside whose chair the place usually occupied by Lord Greville was vacant.

"For my part," cried Madame de St. Pierre, "I never spent a pleasanter day. My yellow lilies were not the least faded when I returned home at night; and we had two charming mazourks."

"Yes, to the great dissatisfaction of the English ladies, I can tell you!" interrupted the old Princess de Chaulieu. "The English ladies declared, in the first place, that for worlds they would not dance such a dance, or make such an exhibition;—in the next place, that none of you had the slightest notion of a mazourk, and

were making sad geese of yourselves;—and the third place, that they had never seen it fore, and had not the least idea how it ougl be danced.—Monsieur de Cerny protests, say, that he often saw it performed in Engl —Ay, I dare say,—on the stage,—but not i ciety, depend upon it! I spent,—*pour mes pé* —nearly twenty years in England.—I ma there,—(still *pour mes pêchés!*) I have bee hundreds of balls in London. At the Duc of Gordon's,—at Devonshire House, in the old times of Devonshire House,—and I can mise you that there was no mazourk!—Ree you please; reels and country-dances wit end,—jogging you to pieces, like farr daughters trotting to market,—but no mazo There was the *boulangère!*—I dare say, b way, that Monsieur de Cerny mistook the *bo gère* for the mazourk.—There *is* some sligh semblance between them,—eh, Sidonie?"

"I beg your pardon, mamma," said M moiselle de Chaulieu, who, like the rest o world, found some difficulty in following thread of her mother's rambling discourses.

"Never mind, my dear. You are better engaged talking to Mademoiselle de Nangis. Eugénie, child, when do you set off for Les Etangs? I shall be very glad, *mon enfant*, to hear that you are gone to Normandy.—You have done yourself no good in Italy.—All your fine bloom is gone. You want the bracing air of the coast; you want the sea breezes.—No one is the worse now and then for sea breezes.—In Madame's time, poor soul, I accompanied her twice to Dieppe; and should not mind going there again, particularly as it might be an advantage to Sidonie, only that it is so near to Eu!—One never feels safe,—one never feels sure of not meeting people whom it would be disagreeable to meet.—You think I am almost as near to them in my house in the Rue de Lille?—Perhaps so; but *en province*, one is more exposed; —*en province*, one is defenceless.—A *partie de campagne?*—Nothing I dote upon like a *partie de campagne!*—Who is talking about a *partie de campagne?*"

"The Duchess is arranging one with Madame de Rostanges, my dear mamma," replied Sidonie

"And where, pray?"

"In the woods of Meudou."

"What folly!—The only place for a *de campagne* at this time of year, is St. Cl cried the Princess. "The lilies of the valle know, Eugénie!—The whole road is cl with *muguet!* Think of a whole road cl with *muguet!* Out of bloom?—the season —Nonsense, my dear!—I saw quantities flower-market of the Madeleine not ten day And just on the road from St. Cloud to d'Avray, through the forest, there is a cha green avenue,—dry, sloping, shady,—(*moi de ça!*) the very thing for a *partie de pagne.*—Ah! Eugénie, *ma petite chatte!*—i be the very thing for your pale cheeks! I than fifty balls,—better than fifty déjeu I was saying yesterday to Monsieur de St. ron, that since your return from Italy, you so altered there was no recognising you.— to-day you look worse than ever!"—

"Not now, mother, that you have br such a flush of bloom into her cheeks!" Mademoiselle de Chaulieu, taking the ha

her friend. "Is anything the matter with you, dearest Eugénie?" whispered she, ashamed of her mother's indelicacy.

"Only the fatigue of yesterday's fête."

"At yesterday's fête, you said you were suffering from the fatigue of Madame de St. Pierre's ball!"

"And at Madame de St. Pierre's ball, she said she was tired with taking so long a ride!" cried the Princess.

"In short, you are resolved that I shall be ill, whether I will or no," cried Mademoiselle de Nangis, trying to rally her spirits. "I have, however, I assure you, no ailment; and should this party, this pic-nic, take place, I promise you to be in full bloom, ghostly and bodily."

It was nevertheless not without cause that Madame de Chaulieu and her daughter found fault with the looks of their young friend. Eugénie, who had arrived in Paris full of spirits, full of excitement, enchanted to find herself once more at home, had suddenly sunk into depression. She was like a person who, after aspiring too high, finds herself suddenly pre-

plentiful crop of cares, or coquetry. The girl, thus sharply roused from the reveries of a first attachment, becomes either disconsolate, peevish, and infirm of health; or rash and reckless, prepared to inflict on others the injury sustained by herself.

It is to avoid this crying evil, that the French have imagined the *mariage de convenance*. The great improbability, the almost impossibility, that the chances of society should unite in marriage persons attracted towards each other by a first mutual choice, first inspired the idea of leaving such selections to the discretion of older heads; an arrangement modified by the reforms of modern society into a suggestion of selection, to be approved or disapproved by the parties.

To insure the success of such a system, it is necessary, however, to forestal the danger of adverse impressions. Hence, the early marriages of the French; hence, their objection to the introduction of unmarried girls into worldly pastimes. Rarely do they visit a ball-room,—still more rarely a theatre.—The man destined to become their husband, is the first to offer

them those attentions which rarely fail to move the feelings of a very young person, instructed to regard the vagaries of choice exercised among ourselves as indelicate and monstrous. The influence of domestic affections,—of a community of interests—of peremptory duties,—completes the charm. And though much may be urged against the wisdom of conventional marriages, yet after examining the domestic history of the higher classes in both countries, more especially when including in the investigation the condition of the single as well as the morality of the married, it will be seen that the question is more nicely balanced than a cursory glance would lead us to suppose.

Mademoiselle de Nangis, with the enthusiasm of a gifted but unformed mind, revolted by the evils of the system, had become a reformer, to follow the usual fate of reformers, and repent her precipitancy. Without parents or near relations to watch over their happiness, the destinies of Eugénie and her sister were governed by a priest-ridden uncle, nearly eighty years of age; who fancied himself providing

admirably for poor Sophie in allying her estate with a noble one adjacent to her own, and quartering her arms with the ancient blazon of the house of Rostanges,—the stripling Marquis, and the Marquis of sixty, being alike unimportant in his eyes.

By this, Eugénie had been disgusted. This abuse of power though fortunate in its results, had determined her to see the world and judge for herself. Her objection to the Comte de St. Sévron was the result of mere waywardness. She had refused him because proposed to her by those in authority over her; and because resolved to seek in the wide field of society a person whose dispositions were thoroughly congenial with her own.

"I must have intelligence,—I must have information,—I must have figure,—I must have manners, temper, and noble birth. With all the rest I can dispense!" was her declaration to Madame de Rostanges, on occasion of a marriage proposed for her by the old Countess of la Roche Aymar with her elder son.

"I scarcely know what advantages you in-

clude among 'all the rest,' my poor child!" was Sophie's wiser reply. "Every woman is sensible of the advantages of figure, mind, temper, manners and birth, but wisely abates in marriage a trifle of her pretensions. We cannot all draw the great prize, my dearest Eugénie. Let those consider themselves lucky who are not fated to a blank."

But Eugénie was seventeen. Eugénie would not yet hear of blanks. She was happy with her sister and the kind Marquis. She did not want to marry; and it was difficult to oppose the wishes of one so attached and so beloved. Madame de Rostanges, accustomed to view in her more gifted sister a superior being, resigned herself without difficulty; it was only the Marquis who shook his head. The Marquis was rich in that worldly wisdom which is better than no wisdom at all; or, at all events, a valuable resource in the order of society to which he belonged.

"Eugénie is wrong to set herself up thus early in defiance to the customs of the country," said he. "When people rebel against the yoke

of public opinion, it is oftener to fall below the level than to rise above it. The usages of a country are the growth of the wisdom of centuries."

"Of the prejudices of centuries!" was the sportive rejoinder of Mademoiselle de Nangis. "Custom makes the Hottentot daub himself with grease,—custom makes the Abyssinian swallow locusts,—and the New Zealander, human flesh. But don't let custom compel me to make a bad wife, my good brother,—whether to your friend Monsieur de St. Sévron, or poor Ferdinand de La Roche Aymar, or even to our free and easy kinsman, Colonel d'Aramon."

Such was the state of her feelings on departing for Italy; and though the high Carlist circles of Rome afforded several suitors who were pronounced by her brother-in-law to be suitable matches, Eugénie persisted in her fastidiousness. Her deportment in society was unexceptionable. She encouraged no one; she gave her attention to no one. The Marquis was the companion in whom she seemed to take delight; and her exemplary care of his comfort

from the moment his health became impaired, was such as not only to call forth the gratitude of her sister, but to render them thankful for the peculiarities of opinion which still assigned them so charming an inmate. Perfect confidence,—confidence without a drawback,—prevailed between the sisters; who, notwithstanding their utter difference of character, were united like night and day, by imperceptible gradations of light and shade harmonizing them into happy combination.

Thus stood affairs when they quitted France thus stood affairs when again they crossed the frontier. Of the three so overjoyed to revisit their native country, Eugénie was perhaps the happiest. Her heart was elate with all the bright impulses of girlhood. An uncloudec destiny lay before her. She was come, dearer than ever to her family, to be folded to the heart of partial friends, and claim her place in those brilliant circles whose favour was bespoken by the popularity of Monsieur and Madame de Rostanges.

Even when they entered the gates of Paris,

even when they installed themselves in the old Hotel in the Rue St. Dominique, the heart of Mademoiselle de Nangis was under the influence of happy illusions. She believed,—what could be more natural,—that it was to *her* the attentions of Lord Greville were devoted. She it was, who, at their first meeting, had attracted his notice; she it was to whom, at the Château de Grangeneuve, his assiduities were directed. Less timid than her sister, she had been more earnest in her expressions of gratitude for his exertions in their behalf; and the intimacy ensuing had been readily endowed by her inexperience with the attributes of love.

In the secrecy of her soul, she believed herself to be an object of preference to one singularly accordant with her preconceived notions of perfection. Person, deportment, temper, talents, were united in Greville. Of all the men she had seen, his air was the most distinguished,—his manner the most ingratiating; and it did not enter into the calculations of Mademoiselle de Nangis, accustomed to find herself considered a suitable match by the highest nobles in

the destiny in store for her. Happy Eug
to have opposed the habits of her countr
the wishes of her friends, to be thus
rewarded! Happy Eugénie! to have es
a marriage with Ferdinand de la Roche A
who could talk of nothing but horses,—and
St. Sévron, severe with the wisdom of t
years' seniority,—to become the chosen of a
high in birth, high in intellectual endowme
and admitted by the universal acclamation
Faubourg to be *le jeune homme le plus dist*
that Great Britain had ever contributed
circles!—The Princesse de Chaulieu,
secure in her own set from English contac
somewhat too fond of repeating the old ass
that "*les Anglais n'ont de mur que les p*
cuites, et de poli que leur acier," was fa
admit that in Milor Grévile she behel

Scarcely, however, had Mademoiselle de Nangis spent a week in Paris, when her illusions vanished. The moment others began to congratulate her on her conquest of the young English lord, she discerned the truth. The total want of embarrassment in her presence which enabled him to dedicate to *her*, attentions he had not courage to offer to her sister, sufficiently indicated his indifference. In their rides,—their drives,—their encounters in the brilliant circles of the Faubourg,—contrary to the habits of French society, it was to *her* side he attached himself, rather than to that of Madame de Rostanges. Eugénie understood it all. She felt that, when occasion forced *her* to exhibit a preference, it was Cerny, or Chaulieu, or Massingberd, she selected, rather than the object of her choice. No consciousness,—no affection !—She saw that Lord Greville did not love her,—rendered clearsighted by her rash attachment to himself!—

The first moment of discovery was one of anguish and self-upbraiding. But reason and reflection convinced her she had done no wrong.

Few but would have been deceived as *she* had been, by the nature of Lord Greville's attentions. Few but would have supposed, as *she* had supposed, that his praise, his admiration, his words of kindness, his looks of regard, had been indicative of preference. If she had erred, it was in infringing the customs of her country, and relying too boldly upon her own judgment and predilections.

It was done, however.—All that remained for her was to suffer,—to suffer in silence and with resignation.—He would not be long among them.—Better for her that the hero of her vain romance should be a foreigner whom after a few weeks she might never more behold, than one of her own countrymen, a member of their society, and affording to her heart a perpetual memento of its folly.

The lapse of a few days brought convictions of a still more agonizing kind. This stranger,—this Lord Greville,—whose merits and attractions she had been constantly reciting in the ears of her sister,—was it certain that Madame de Rostanges beheld him with indifference?—

Was it *possible* for a man so gifted and so devoted, to be constantly by Sophie's side, without producing an impression on her feelings?—Poor Eugénie clasped her hands over her bosom, pressing them forcibly upon her heart as if to subdue its new and throbbing emotions, while inquiring of herself whether this horrible thought were not the inspiration of jealousy; and whether she were not doubly guilty in imputing such a fault to her sister.

Still, the thought recurred,—still, the apprehension quickened. There was every reason, indeed, for its recurrence.—Greville was constantly in her society.—She, who for a time had hailed his visits with such pride, such joy, as a tribute paid to herself, saw him arrive day after day, with the same seeming courtesies for *her*, — the same scarcely concealable adoration for Madame de Rostanges!—It required some fortitude to retain her place in that crowded *salon*, in order that the world might continue to mistake his motives as she had once mistaken them; not as a solace to her pride, but as a safe-

guard for the reputation of the unsuspecting Sophie.

"I would die rather than that a contemptuous word or look should be directed towards *her !*"—faltered Eugénie, when, taking refuge at length in her own chamber, she found comfort in tears. "I would die rather than that poor Rostanges, who takes such pride in her, should suffer a moment's uneasiness on her account. Heaven knows he has had cause to take pride in her !—With all her beauty,—such gentleness,—such purity,—such absence of coquetry !—In Italy,—here,—of what adoration has she not been the object;—and almost without perceiving that she was admired. No, no !—the peace of my good brother-in-law must not be endangered by even a suspicion of evil."

The prolongation of Greville's stay in Paris was consequently a serious misery to poor Eugénie. She was not prepared for such an extension of her trials. The hourly sense of mortification arising from his presence, recollections of the hopes she had cherished and of

their groundless nature, were doubly embittered by the consciousness that her devotion remained undiminished. There was such a charm in his every look,— his every movement! — Perfect grace, perfect breeding, seemed to govern his slightest gesture. Even as regarded his moral qualities, she felt convinced that he was the dupe of his own heart, and knew not the guilty passion he was cherishing.

She was sometimes almost out of patience with the pertinacity of her brother-in-law in inviting, nay, almost forcing Lord Greville to the house. Though the conduct of the Marquis de Rostanges was actuated by sentiments of grateful hospitality, she thought there was something ignoble in courting so warmly the friendship of a man of Greville's consequence. She was now beginning to understand the eminence of his position, — to understand it through the vulgar obsequiousness of English servants, and the vulgar boasting of Massingberd. Yet still the Marquis would not be dissuaded from inducing him to share their daily meals, and use their modest equipages.

When Lord Greville presented her or her sister, but oftener herself, with some rare exotic, Rostanges would descant upon its cost and value, as though the purchase had been made by a prodigal son of his own. Eugénie could not bear that the Marquis should be degraded in his eyes by such officious parsimoniousness. What were his expenses to *them*? —or why should they withdraw him from his luxurious haunts into their more simple household?

It is difficult to be satisfied with the conduct of others towards the object of our affections: it is still more difficult to be satisfied with the conduct of the object of our affection towards others. Mademoiselle de Nangis, who, when in company with Lord Greville and her sister, was constantly on the watch lest anything unguarded in their deportment should betray them to others, or to each other, and whose nights were rendered sleepless and days anxious by perceiving the rapid growth of a passion gradually defying all control, even his own, no sooner heard him taxed by the Faubourg with a "*penchant pour*

cette charmante Lédi Cobamme," than she felt inclined to resent it as an infidelity. An attachment which was to take him wholly out of their circle and withdraw his interest entirely from the Hotel de Rostanges, was a calamity she had not contemplated.

At the fête of the Duchesse de St. Pierre, she noted his conduct with surprise. At the Embassy breakfast, she was displeased as well as amazed. He seemed to be trifling with her sister;—to be attempting to gain an influence over her feelings by exciting her jealousy. That any man, even Lord Greville, should presume to coquet with one so irreproachable in word or deed as Sophie de Rostanges, appeared impossible. Yet who could say what evil influence might not have been exercised over his character by such companions as St. George, and Frederick Massingberd?—

The pleasantries of Madame de St. Pierre concerning the gardenias, therefore, more especially when coupled with Greville's unusual absence, irritated and annoyed her. She was vexed, too, to hear her sister acquiesce so

readily in the project of a *partie de campagne*, in which she felt certain that Greville would be included. Did they not meet often enough,—morning,—evening,—in private,—in public?—Was not that noble, that expressive countenance ever before them,—ever beaming upon them?—And must Sophie devise new modes for attracting him to their society, and insuring the dangerous enjoyment of his own?

All that morning, however, no Greville made his appearance!—By the decree of the Marquis de Rostanges, they were consequently obliged to forego their ride; and though, on entering the calêche for an airing, Sophie carefully indicated to the coachman the route usually pursued by their intimates, along the Champs Elysées, through the Porte Dauphine, and past La Muette towards the Mare d'Auteuil,—of Greville, they saw nothing! All the *élégants* of Paris were in the drive. Cerny, the two La Roche Aymars, Chaulieu, St. George, St. Pierre, were ready, hat in hand, to hail them as they passed. But neither Greville nor Massingberd made their appearance.

The evening was devoted to the opening of Franconi's Amphitheatre, in the Champs Elysées, at which the leading *lionnes* of the Faubourg had given each other rendezvous; and the Princesse de Chaulieu, in whose party Eugénie and her sister were included, had been careful to extend her invitation to their English friend. After the Cirque, they were to repair to Tortoni's, to eat ices and prolong as much as possible their evening's amusement. But when the moment arrived for driving to Franconi's, no Greville was to be seen; and the cabriolet containing the Prince de Chaulieu and Frédéric de St. Pierre constituted their escort. Having assumed the chairs belonging to them in the front row, (the only place at Franconi's which can be pre-engaged, an advantage counterbalanced by the annoyance of proximity to the horses and dust,) Eugénie gazed vainly around, in the hope of discovering among the two thousand persons present, the well-known face whose absence so much disquieted her. But no!—All the *lions* were there;—not an idler of Paris was missing among those assem-

bled to applaud the grace and activity of Madame Lejars, and the drolleries of Auriol; —but no sign of Lord Greville!—

"Where has our *cher milor* hidden himself this evening?"—demanded the Princesse de Chaulieu of Madame de Rostanges, leaning across her daughter Sidonie and Mademoiselle de Nangis to make the inquiry, and as usual listening to no answer but her own.—"Ah! very true!—All those horrid Englishmen remained at the Embassy till five this morning, indulging in a second hot supper and iced champagne after we were gone; securing the poor dear ambassadress exactly fourteen hours fatigue, and themselves such dreadful headaches to-day that you see they are not presentable!—You fancy Lord Greville has an aversion to wine?—My dear child, no man has an aversion to wine when he finds himself in the midst of twenty others who are fond of it.—*Il faut hurler avec les loups!*—Depend upon it the sober solemn Greville drank, sang, and made a fool of himself among the best; more especially as he had been undergoing the *peine forte et dure* of entertaining

all the evening that pretty, silly countrywoman of his, Miledi Cobbamme.—*Quelle poupée!*—Not an idea!—not a faculty!—never was there anything so insipid;—no *trait* in her remarks, not even the modest merit of good sense.—Never did one see so complete an automaton! By the way though, now I come to think of it, I am not so sure that this Lord Greville of yours is of the same opinion; for as I was returning from a visit at St. Ouen, just before dinner, whom should I meet on the road to St. Denis, in a post carriage and four, but the automaton and her cross husband,—with another coachfull of red-faced English *bonnes*, and white-faced English children; and after the coachfull of *bonnes* and children, a *fourgon* and four, to contain their rattletraps,—all according to the regular English system of rendering a journey insupportable by dint of travelling with what are called comforts;—and *after* the *fourgon* and four, containing the portable bedstead and silver stewpans, and all the rest of the nursery trumpery,—guess what?—Lord Greville, my dear!—*ce bon milor*, packed in

a postchaise with his mamma, like Polichinelle and Pierrette in a showman's pack!"

"On the road to England?"—exclaimed Engénie and her sister, at the same moment.

"Off to England,—and, as you perceive, in the train of the pretty milédi with the flaxen ringlets!—He told me yesterday he should spend the summer in France. Yet in the course of the evening, you see, she obtained such an ascendancy over him, that he could not bear to let her set off alone!—Somehow or other, it all escaped my memory, or I should have told you when you came in.—But for my part, I think we have no great loss in him; for though his figure and manners are well enough, (they remind me a little, a *very* little, of poor dear Louis de Narbonne,) yet I suspect he was always playing a part!—I suspect that *le fond de son caractère* is cold and haughty, and that he was, on the whole, bored among us.—Let him run after his *mouton qui rêve* of an Englishwoman; who will quote Ossian to him, and listen to his sonnets to the moon.—*On se passera bien du beau milor.*"—

Unspeakable was the joy of Mademoiselle de Nangis when, at the close of Madame de Chaulieu's rambling narrative, she found her hand affectionately pressed by her sister in token of sympathy.

"*Ma pauvre Eugénie!*"—was all that Madame de Rostanges could venture to whisper. But there was such sincerity in her tone, such earnestness in her tearful eyes, that Mademoiselle de Nangis felt as much convinced as by a world of protestations. At that moment, she would gladly have embraced the kind sister whom she had presumed to suspect; the kind sister who, discerning her preference, had cultivated Lord Greville's friendship for her sake. All her regret for his abrupt departure, was effaced by the joy of a discovery that restored to her respect the object of her dearest affection!—

At the close of the second act, the little party quitted the theatre together, to repair to Tortoni's. But Madame de Rostanges declined accompanying them. Perceiving the struggle of her sister's feelings, though imperfectly

acquainted with its nature, she chose to return quietly home. But no sooner were the sisters alone in the carriage, than Eugénie fell upon her neck in an agony of tears.

"That it should end thus!" faltered Madame de Rostanges, tenderly embracing her. "That after all our friendship, all our confidence in him, he should leave us without so much as a word of adieu!—My dear, dear Eugénie!—The man who could act thus, is unworthy your regard.—With delight and pride did I watch the growth of an affection which I trusted was mutual.—But a man thus cruelly *inconséquent* could never have made you happy! Console yourself—dearest,—take courage—a brighter destiny is in store for you."

Mademoiselle de Nangis returned with warmth the tender caresses of her sister; but the conflicting nature of her feelings defied expression.

In gloomy silence, they proceeded to the Hotel de Rostanges, prepared to hasten at once to their own rooms. When lo! as the servants threw open the doors of the saloon, the first

object that struck them was Greville, ensconced in a corner of the sofa, occupied in reading to the Marquis the columns of the *Messager!* Refreshments and lights stood on the table, awaiting their return; and with a smiling countenance, the visitor rose hastily from his chair to welcome them home.

Eugénie was too much overpowered to utter a syllable;—but Madame de Rostanges could as little repress her exclamation of "Greville?—here,—*still* here?—We heard that you had started for England"—

"You *could* not have done me so much injustice!"—replied Lord Greville, gravely leading her to a seat. "Quit Paris without one grateful word, one farewell to those so dear to me?—No! you cannot have believed it!"—

"And yet the report reached me from those who actually witnessed your departure!"

"I accompanied my mother at her desire as far as St. Denis, and rode back. She seemed resolved not to lose sight of me this morning for a single moment," replied Greville, more cheerfully. "I could have sworn from her manner

she fancied that her presence secured me from some terrible evil. However, she was satisfied that I complied with her desire; more particularly when she saw me gallop safe off from St. Denis, on my return to Paris."

"How singular!"—murmured Mademoiselle de Nangis.

"How delightful!"—added her sister. "Eugénie, you do not sufficiently express to Lord Greville your joy at his return. Yet half an hour ago, how completely the news of his sudden departure overcame us!—"

Mademoiselle de Nangis coloured deeply, but remained silent. She felt this to be a betrayal of her confidence; and was moreover far from satisfied with Greville's account of his proceedings of the day.

"I returned so late from St. Denis," observed his Lordship, addressing Madame de Rostanges, as if eager to cover the embarrassment of poor Eugénie, "that you were already off to Franconi's before I reached the Rue St. Dominique. I knew that by following you I should gain nothing,—that it would be impossible for me to

obtain a place near your party; and therefore persuaded the Marquis to let me spend the evening with *him*. During your absence, I replaced Mademoiselle de Nangis in her domestic duties. After sweetening Monsieur de Rostanges' coffee, I read him fifty pages of 'Fleur d'Epine,'—till the *Messager* arrived; and we were deep in the affairs of the East, when your carriage drove into the courtyard."

These explanations seemed to clear up all perplexities; and never had Greville appeared so charming to either of the sisters, as on that eventful evening. He was like a recovered treasure. They had fancied him lost to them for ever; and to find him there, domesticated in the very heart of the family, in more than his usual spirits, more than his usual attractions, was almost too trying a transition from despair to joy!—

He was placed between them at table,—he was soothed,—he was caressed; till the Marquis de Rostanges playfully assured him it would be the ruin of him to become in this way *l'enfant gâté des dames*,—the Vert-Vert of the convent.

—The irony of the old gentleman did not however prevent Madame de Rostanges from overwhelming him with kindness; or Lord Greville from feeling conscious that the position he occupied was the most enviable upon earth!

END OF VOL. I.

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GREVILLE:

OR,

A SEASON IN PARIS.

BY MRS. GORE,

AUTHORESS OF

"MRS. ARMYTAGE," "THE PEERESS," ETC.

"Oh! English people,—English people!—why can you not stay and perish of apoplexy and Yorkshire pudding at home?"—

PELHAM.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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GREVILLE;

OR,

A SEASON IN PARIS.

CHAPTER I.

ARM.—Je lui ferais du mal volontiers!
SARA.—Mais il ne vous en a jamais fait?
ARM.—Il faut bien que quelqu'un commence.
LES CLAQUEURS.

FROM that evening, the previous intimacy of the Earl with the family in the Rue St. Dominique seemed to ripen into warmer friendship. There was no drawback on his happiness. His mother had made it her urgent entreaty that he would prolong his stay in France,—being thoroughly possessed with the belief that Greville was intent upon hurrying to England, under the influence of a fatal passion for the pretty sister

of Massingberd; and thus released fro engagement with home, Greville was fr accept the enjoyments courting him on side.

He was now as completely adopted int society of the Faubourg, as Waverley int Clan of Mac Ivor. He was now one of No one asked why he was there. Evil inte ters were satisfied that he was the lover of dame de Rostanges,—fairer interpreters th was the *prétendu* of her sister; and all, th was a general favourite with all.—The wo influence reviled by St. Sévron had effecte business. The priesthood of the Golden had surrounded him with their pæans;— though the "*ce charmant* Lord Grévile" w theme of general praise; "*ce jeune milor son million de rentes*" was the object of deeper idolatry. But that the intensity c devotion to the Hotel de Rostanges was so cl manifest, there would have been more tha attack upon his fidelity.

He was now scarcely ever apart from sisters. In the summer season, it is so ea

be together!—Winter serves to isolate people in their several households. An excuse seems wanted for defying inclemencies of weather for the mere purpose of a visit; and though the gay ball-room may open its nightly portals in spite of snow or rain, it is with a degree of pomp fatal to intimate enjoyment, and a degree of coldness arising from the interval of mornings spent asunder. In summer, on the contrary, instead of the thousands of roofs detaching the world into sullen fractions, one universal canopy seems to unite them into a single family. People live out of doors.—People meet, hand to hand,—walking,—riding,—in open carriages,—at fêtes,—in the ordinary promenades.—Society becomes more familiarly linked, nay, almost inseparable; nor is it till the close of the season dissolves the charm, that we become aware of the closeness of the intimacies that have sprung up; or of the earnestness of those affections, whose seed, germinating unnoticed, has sent forth a tree whose branches may overshadow our future destinies.

All was now excitement in the Faubourg.

Breakfasts, pic-nics, parties to Versailles, to St. Germain's,—on horseback, by railroad, by water, —served to vary the mornings, the evenings of which were devoted to unceremonious dancing to the piano.

The *grand monde* of Paris, if more formal in its politeness than that of London, is far easier in its habits of life. But it is also more excitable when once the epidemic of dissipation prevails. The young married women composing its coteries are, of course, freer to execute wild projects of diversion, than the young ladies of London controlled by elderly chaperons.

The Chantilly race-week at length arrived; and Greville, albeit too indolent to enjoy such a reckless chase after pleasure, found himself included in a party of *lions* and *lionnes*, headed by the Duchesse de St. Pierre, which took its departure at the close of a brilliant ball given by one of the loveliest women in Paris, allowing only time for the change of dress indispensable to the expedition. At the suggestion of his friends St. George and Fred Massingberd, and after the example of half the young men of his

acquaintance, he had sometime before engaged a commodious suite of rooms at the Hotel de Bourbon-Condé, for the race-week; and, on the favourite day, the Rostanges family, too prudent to engage in the noisy party of Madame de St. Pierre, were to become his guests.

This pleasure was to be purchased, however, by two days' separation; and Greville quitted Paris thoroughly out of humour. But after a refreshing drive through twenty miles of quiet corn-fields and vineyards, clothed with the tender verdure of the season, he could scarcely refuse a token of approval to the scenes of mingled courtliness, rurality, and sportsmanship, to which, in company with the Duchess and her attendant *lions*, he found himself transported. He was obliged,

> Dans sa pompe élégante d'admirer Chantilly,
> De héros en héros, d'age en age embelli;

and though, in place of heroes, the high street of the little town was encumbered with dandies and jockeys of all nations and languages, doing a bit of sportsmanship on a miniature scale, —while at the window of every paltry lodg-

ing, stood lounging some well-known *flaneur* of Crémieux's or the Bouvelarts,—nay, though the palace of which he had heard so much, consisted only of a gigantic stable, sole relic of its departed grandeur and affording an absurd contrast to the adjoining chateau, Lord Greville was agreeably surprised by the elegance of a scene resembling our own Goodwood, Croxton Park, the Hoo, or Heaton, rather than the uproarious race-courses usually met with in the environs of a metropolis.

The charm of the first coup d'œil, however, soon subsided. The weariness of spirits caused by being up all night in a heated ball-room, was not improved by the bantering of Madame de St. Pierre, or the over-excitement of his sporting friends. He had little difficulty in escaping from the noisy group; and while wandering listlessly over the course, comparing its gay dancing tents with the drinking booths of Epsom and gambling booths of Ascot, and admiring the long line of forest scenery skirting the horizon above the palace, he found himself suddenly accosted by the Comte de St. Sévron.

"*Vous avez l'air complétement désorienté l*"

said he. "Have the civility, my dear Lord, to put a better face upon the matter, nor let all the world perceive how miserably you are bored!"—

"*J'ai passé une nuit blanche!*" replied Greville, cordially accepting his offered hand. "I have not been in bed since Tuesday; yet dare not plead guilty of fatigue, while so many of your fair countrywomen who are in the same case with myself, shew such bright faces on the matter!"—

"You have found at least a plausible pretext for your *ennui!*"—cried St. Sévron. "But it does not impose upon me. I am aware how thoroughly our infant attempts at sportsmanship must provoke the contempt of a legitimate son of the turf,—a Meltonian,—a Newmarket man, like yourself."

"You do me too much honour, and too little!" cried Lord Greville, laughing. "*There* stand the only three Newmarket men present!"—he continued, pointing first to a little weazened jockey who was proceeding to the weighing-stand, and afterwards to Lord St. George and Fred, who, with the green cards of the Jockey

Club stuck ostentatiously in their hats, were lounging over the railings of the Tribune belonging to that erudite department of the sporting world.—"You would blush for me, if I dared reveal my utter indifference towards all that relates to the turf!"—

"But as a matter of fashion,—as a matter of *bon ton!*"—pleaded St. Sévron, with affected earnestness. "I hope you don't imagine that one in twenty of the bearded *lions* whom you see parading the course, per virtue of the magic green card which alone secures them admission, know a horse from a jackass, or have brains or arithmetic to compute the odds?—I suspect that some of their 'books' might be placed as a curiosity in the British Museum!—No, no, my dear Lord!—A luxurious club-house, where we enjoy *gros jeu* and the best cook and billiard-table in Paris, constitutes our notions of jockeyism. I heard some notary's daughter of Chantilly inquiring ingenuously just now of her papa, the meaning of the green cards?—'*Mais qu'est ce que c'est donc que les jockeis?*'—'*Ma chère amie, ce sont les roués les plus huppés de Paris,—voilà!*'—

replied papa, wisely putting horseflesh out of the question. As to the improvement of the breed of horses in France—" a gesture of contempt from St. Sévron filled up the sentence.

"In short, you are now commencing the game we began in Charles the Second's time," added Lord Greville; "and in spite of all that has been written by able hands from that day to this in praise and honour of horse-racing, I own I see little advantage in creating a race too fleet for any reasonable purpose. Massingberd swears this branch of my education has been so shamefully neglected, that I shall live to disgrace myself in good company by my ignominious ignorance. Certain it is, that if insured of a sufficient number of tolerable horses for my use, I care not how little I hear of the stable. My visit to Chantilly has any other object than the betting-stand."

"Degenerate Briton!"—cried St. Sévron, with a smile. "After your brilliant courses at Epsom and Ascot with their hundreds of thousands of spectators, and hundreds of thousands on the race, to pretend patience with our little

courtly bowling-green, with its miniature royal pavilion and *tribune des lionnes !*"—

"*C'est à mettre sous verre !*"—replied Greville with a smile. "With respect to the sport, it serves just as well to bet upon, I fancy, as the Derby or Leger—"

"Or to bring people five-and-twenty miles to yawn at!—"added St. Sévron, on whom the ennui depicted in the blank countenance of poor Greville was not thrown away. "On Sunday, by the way, all Paris will be here. *Tout ce qui se respecte un peu* must be at Chantilly on Sunday!"—

"Our friends from the Rue St. Dominique among the rest,"—said Greville, more cheerfully, readily falling into the trap placed for him. "I have rooms at the Bourbon, and they have promised to dine with me."

"Ah!—you are staying, then, at Chantilly?—The most inveterate of the jockey club could do no worse!"—cried the Count.

"I have an apartment in common with two determined sportsmen," replied Greville, by way of excuse. "But I shall not have courage

to loiter out my four days, *this* being, I am told, a favourable sample of the sport. What will the course be to-morrow, with the *tribune* of the *lionnes* deserted! — No Madame de St. Pierre, no Madame de la Roche Aymar!"—

"To *you*, I suspect, pretty much what it is to-day,"— interrupted St. Sévron,—"a blank, my Lord!—But don't be so easily discouraged. On Saturday, they usually get up a *chasse;* or, if the weather be bad enough, (and there is as sure to be rain for Chantilly races as for Noah's ark,) a pic-nic at Les Etangs." Lord Greville started. "I allude to a *rendezvous de chasse* of that name, in the forest of Chantilly," added St. Sévron, with a significant smile. "It was not my intention to startle you."

"And *you?*"— interrupted Greville, in his turn; "since you have not zeal enough in the cause to wear your jockey card upon your sleeve, and since it is clearly not *dévouement* to *les princes* which brings you hither, (the Chaussée d'Antin, I conclude, furnishes the royal tent with the great unknown in crimson cravats who are paying their court so earnestly yonder to the

Duc de Nemours and Prince de Joinville!) may I ask what you are doing so far from head-quarters?"—

"You look upon me, I see, as a mere *badaud de Paris!*"—cried St. Sévron, laughing. "*J'accepte, mon cher,—j'accepte!*—I confess I am very little better. But I have a little *bicoque* here on the skirts of the forest, of which I am expected to do the honours to my friends, when such occasions as Chantilly races put them in mind of its existence and mine. But for their engagements with you, Madame de Rostanges and Mademoiselle Eugénie would probably have honoured me with their company on Sunday. To-day, *je donne à diner* to the young Duc and Duchesse de Clermont, and one or two more who, though possessing the hippodromic organ and frequenting all the races in the environs of Paris, do not aspire to the honours of lionism."

"Alas! that I dare but throw over my own noisy dinner-party and entreat you to include me in yours!"—sighed Greville, already foreseeing the tumult likely to arise from a mélange

of English and foreign jockeys, smoking, singing, and running their races over again. "Enable me at least to bear to Monsieur de Rostanges, whom I shall see to-morrow in Paris, the welcome news that you will meet him at dinner on Sunday?"—

"You *do* return, then, to-night to Paris?"—cried St. Sévron; then, fearing his question might appear indiscreet, he hastily added—"Would that I could accept your tempting offer!—The proverb says, that those who don't want to play the mountebank, should not exhibit themselves on *les tréteaux;* for once there, they must either act or be pelted!—So I, who have been vain enough to shew the capabilities of my house, must persist in my hospitality through the week, or have its windows broken. But here comes one of your inveterates!" he continued, as Massingberd, with a sullen face, and his hands thrust into the pockets of his white *paletot*, sauntered towards them.

"I am afraid you lost on the last race?" inquired Greville, who had been allowed to hear nothing for ten days past from Lord St. George

and Fred, but the state of the odds and of their books.

"Lost?—yes!—that is, unless the stewards pronounce an equitable decision and give it against the winner!"—cried Fred, doggedly. "We are unanimous,—the club is unanimous,—that is *all* but unanimous on the subject. Clermont, who has fifteen thousand on the race, swears he will not pay a sous till the question has been referred to the London jockey club."

The Comte de St. Sévron slightly raised his eyebrows. He thought it singular that his friend the Duc de Clermont, the most French among the French, should propose to submit to English authority even in the matter of horse-racing.

"Clermont made it a particular request to me not to book up till he has had the matter properly investigated.—Wigson, the Newmarket jockey, tells us it is a hollow thing.—But they say Apperley is on the course?—I am looking everywhere for Apperley!—Apperley would decide it!"—

"The stewards, I should imagine, would de-

cide it," replied Greville, vexed at his pertinacity in talking English, and excluding St. Sévron from the conversation.

"The stewards!—The idea of submitting to have our pockets picked under the sanction of a set of snobs, who don't know half so much of the turf as an Eton boy!"—cried Fred, his temper evidently lost with his money. "I'm sorry for the Duke of Orleans!—To go to the expense and trouble of a stud, and have one's horses run at the discretion of such a pack of tailors, must be cursedly mortifying. As Clermont was saying just now, I'm damned sorry for the poor Prince Royal."—

St. Sévron was pretty nearly sure that his friend (who never called the Prince Royal otherwise than the Duc de Chartres) had said nothing of the kind. A moment afterwards, the St. James's-street dandy afforded him still further cause for amusement by the insolent stare with which he regarded a young Frenchman, of modest manners and somewhat homely costume, who, after courteously raising his hat to the two foreigners, entered into familiar con-

versation with himself. His coat not being a Blin nor his cravat a Boivin, Fred Massingberd saw fit to affect surprise at an act of civility usually addressed by high-bred Parisians, without formal introduction, to the intimates of their intimates.

Lord Greville, who was becoming a fluent Frenchman, entered cheerfully into the chat of St. Sévron with the new comer; while Massingberd, big with an ineffable sense of superiority, took out a cigar, replaced his hands in the pockets of his *paletot*, and all but turned his back upon the party. It was impossible to embody more completely the empty insolence of exquisitism.

"So you mean to dispute the issue of the last race?"—demanded St. Sévron of the new comer, who was, in fact, no other than the Duc de Clermont.

"*I* dispute?—I had next to nothing on it, *mon cher*,—*which* next to nothing I have already paid," replied Clermont. "Some one belonging to the jockey club raised an objection to the entry, which was instantly overruled. But

what are we doing here? We shall see nothing of the next race, which is a crack one. Come with me, my dear St. Sévron, to the ladies' stand. There are several seats vacant behind the Duchess and Madame de St. Pierre. You belong, I fancy, to her party?"—he continued, courteously addressing Greville. "Perhaps you will do me the favour to join us?"—

Before he reached the end of his speech, Massingberd had taken himself off to the stables; there to vent his mortification at having been convicted of a pitiful meanness, by swearing manfully at every trainer, and kicking every dog that came in his way!—His savage humour did not escape the notice of his jockey associates, who decided that Monsieur de Masanbert could neither lose his money like a man, nor pay it like a gentleman; and after a gay dinner given that day, at the close of the sport, by the Amphitrion of *les lions*, the epitaph originally written for Mirabeau's father was inscribed by some unknown hand on the room-door he occupied at the Hotel de Bourbon Condé:

Ci-git F. M.—blagueur et brutal,
Qui jurait bien et qui payait mal!—

The ingratiating manners of his more polished countryman, meanwhile, recommended him so rapidly to the friendship of the good-humoured Clermont and his pretty wife, that Lord Greville had little difficulty in persuading the Duke and Duchess to accompany St. Sévron without ceremony to the dinner-party he was to give to their mutual friends from the Rue St. Dominique.

"*Un diner?—un diner prié?*"—cried the Duke. "I am half afraid!—On the last day of the races, it is the custom here to run a little into excess! — I suspect you mean to endanger the safety of our return to Paris?"

"No fear!"—replied Greville, in the same tone. "We will all take our sober departure together, immediately after dinner."

Nothing could be more satisfactory than to have secured for Sophie and her sister, a party so much to their taste as the Clermonts and St. Sévron. It was the first time they had been his guests, since the memorable epoch

which brought them together at the Golden Lion!

"I am fated to do the honours of my table to them at some dirty inn!"—murmured the Earl, surveying with disgust the shabby apartments for which he was paying the price of Mivart's *appartement des Princes*. "No matter! On Sunday, these miserable rooms, which will seem more brilliant to *me* than the finest palace in Europe, shall be rendered worthier their reception."

From the days of Boccaccio's Federigo accordingly, down to those of the *fermier général*, who, in the month of March, fed upon forced green peas the cow that was to afford milk for the lady of his love,—never was hero of romance so luxurious in his celebration of the rites of hospitality!—Already, Chevet and Tortoni were beginning to inquire the nation and language of the new Demidoff, at whose orders their *magazins* were put under requisition without regard to cost or care.

But if Greville looked forward with satisfaction to the promised party, his friends in the

Rue St. Dominique were scarcely less delighted. Neither Sophie nor her sister had ever visited Chantilly, or witnessed more of sporting pleasures than is afforded by the sandy desert of a race-course in the Champs Elysées; and now, with childlike eagerness, Madame de Rostanges anticipated the pastimes of the day, while with womanly sensibility, Eugénie thought only of its pleasures.—From the period of Lady Cobham's visit to Paris, Mademoiselle de Nangis had begun to form a different estimate of the attentions of Lord Greville. To his pretty countrywoman, his demeanour had been as assiduous as to her sister. It was probably the custom of his country to display this specious gallantry. They had perhaps attributed undue importance to his attentions to Sophie; perhaps mistaken the nature of his sentiments for herself!—

"There is between us such entire sympathy of tastes and opinions," argued Eugénie, "that were a mutual understanding once established, I could not long be an object of indifference in his eyes. Yet freely as I talk with others, in *his* presence, I become embarrassed!—When

Greville is conversing with my sister, on questions in which circumstances have rendered me better informed than Sophie, I dare not utter a syllable!—I, so reckless,—so wilful,—become abashed by the presence of one who is himself more timid than a girl!—My sister laughs and talks with him,—Madame de St. Pierre,—Madame de la Roche Aymar,—all of them;—and with *them* he is amiable and lively. Oh! that I could overcome this foolish reserve!—for how can he ever like me, whom he sees only in the silent sullen mood that offers so little encouragement to friendship?—I will try to do better!—I will try to appear before him in my real character. In the country, people are more at their ease. At Les Etangs, all will go well. Meanwhile, the *gêne* inseparable from the *salon* ofthe Hotel de Rostanges, may possibly be dispelled by the excitement of our charming expedition to Chantilly.—There,—there—at least, I shall enjoy a day of happiness!"—

CHAPTER II.

Corbleu !—dit le chevalier,—cette fois je vous ai
votre damnée habitude de céremonies.

P. DE M

MEANWHILE, in spite of the ol
thrown in their way by the assiduities
keepers and officiousness of couriers, t
velling party from the Hotel Bristol r
Calais and crossed the water in safety.
almost too much for the systematic good
ing of Lady Greville to bear to the end

consolation to know that, thanks to her prudence, her idolized son was now in safety.

Any accidental spectator of her ladyship's arrival at Greville Abbey,—rich, beautiful, luxurious Greville Abbey,—with all its charms of scenery,—all its refinements of accommodation,—all its tribes of menials, chariots and horsemen,—might have supposed that the destinies of the Countess left her little in *need* of consolation. Her triumphs as legislatress over the estate, did, indeed, for a time, almost compensate her vexations as a mother. Dowdeswell had done wonders during her absence,—that is, wonders in strictly obeying her commands. The park, the gardens, were in their utmost beauty,—a beauty how enhanced by comparison with the uncouth pleasure-grounds of other countries!

Never had the soft green turf, the venerable timber trees, appeared so lovely in her sight. The gardens too,—the gardens of her own creation,—were indescribably beautiful, after the formal parterres of the Continent. Yet, at the close of a week's survey, she began to find that

the spot of which she had sacrificed so much to secure the undivided sway, no longer sufficed for her enjoyment. The stir and movement of her recent life had created new inclinations. Like other proprietors of grand places in the country, of which they are occasionally allowed unmolested enjoyment, she discovered, in short, that the abbey, if very beautiful, was wretchedly dull.

"After all, I should be ten times happier if on a visit to my son, and surrounded by his wife and family!"—was her secret reflection. "If Hugo had not formed this unlucky attachment to Lady Cobham, I would have prevailed upon him to spend the remainder of the summer at the abbey. But I must not think of it! At present, there would be too much danger in his return to England! The moment he arrived here, I should have that designing woman come and settle herself at Hill Hall."

"Well! my dear Mrs. Massingberd!—what do you say *now* concerning the friend of your own condition in life?"—inquired the old gentleman of his wife, about a month after the

re-installation of the Countess at Greville Abbey. "Pray has she returned your visit?"—

No answer!—

Mrs. Massingberd continued to ply her knitting needles, as if absorbed in the occupation.

"I asked you, my dear, whether Lady Greville had called here since her return?" repeated her husband in a louder key.

"I told you last week, Mr. Massingberd,—No!"

"I thought she might have driven over since. Has not she even sent a card?"—

"A card!—a card would be a positive affront, considering the terms on which we stand!"

"Not much worse, perhaps, than taking no notice of you at all," rejoined the provoking husband.

"Her ladyship may, perhaps, still suffer from the fatigues of her journey. At all events, she must have a thousand pressing occupations after so prolonged an absence from home," replied Mrs. Massingberd, with studied formality.

"Pho, pho!—ladyships with forty thousand a

year at their disposal, are seldom troubled wit very urgent occupations," cried the obstina old gentleman. "After directing the groom t the chambers whereabouts to stick the ne antiques, pots and pans from Herculaneum, cora and shell-work from Naples, and gaudy pe dules from Paris, which I have no doubt sh has been goose enough to bring over, what e earth has Lady Greville to do, except recolle the civilities due to her country-neighbour Didn't I always tell you the woman had a more heart than a cucumber?"—

"I suspect it is because she has too mu heart that Lady Greville has so singularly de layed her visit to Hill Hall!" cried Mrs. Ma singberd. "Lady Greville feels conscious o having acted ungraciously towards the Col hams."

"Ungraciously?—Why, you have been alway preaching to me about her ladyship's wonde ful civilities to Julia at Naples,—and kindness t Julia at Milan,—and affection for Julia a Paris."—

"Yes! but not *since!*—I said nothing of her conduct to Julia in London, because I thought it might exasperate you."

"Her conduct to Julia in London exasperate *me!*—Not it!—Julia has got a stout fellow of a husband to fight her battles, and one who takes good care of her, too, unless I'm much mistaken. And as I'm certain the poor girl herself hasn't spirit to hurt a fly, I am not afraid that even such a cat-o'-mountain as your friend Lady Greville could be provoked into *very* hard usage of her."

"Not when I assure you that she never took the slightest notice of her from the moment of their arrival in town?"—

"I suppose Ju didn't make herself agreeable on the journey. She never had much to say for herself, poor thing!"

"And *that* you think sufficient reason for Lady Greville to cut a person with whom she had been living for months on terms of the most intimate friendship?"

"Why *did* my daughter live with her, pray,

on terms of the most intimate friendship? If people *will* form connexions out of their own sphere of life—"

"Sir James Cobham's wife, Mr. Massingberd, is in a sphere of life to form connexions with the first people in the land!"

"Ay!—and to be cut by them afterwards! But has Julia no idea, pray, of the motive of her particular friend's very particular impertinence?"

"Not the least in the world."

"Then depend upon it the old lady is a little cracked!" said the irreverent Mr. Massingberd. "Most female despots grow crazy with too much power or cherry bounce, before they come to an end;—Queen Bess,—Queen Anne,—Queen Cat of Russia,—Queen ——"

"I have, however, my *suspicions!*"—interrupted Mrs. Massingberd, knitting away in double quick time, and paying no attention to her husband's harangue.

"Suspicions are ugly things, my dear; make 'em over to me, and get quit of 'em!"

"I am pretty nearly sure," resumed the lady, in a confidential tone, "that Lady Greville fancies her son has attached himself to our poor dear, simple, unoffending Julia!"

"I should have thought *that* was an idea more likely to have ruffled the temper of my friend Cobham!"—replied old Massingberd, with a chuckling laugh. "But what makes you think so—eh?"

"Because Julia requested me not to allude to Lady Greville's conduct in my letters,—a proof that she attributes it to some motive likely to be displeasing to her husband."

"Very shrewdly guessed, my dear, for a woman of your years and faculties!" cried Mr. Massingberd, much amused. "It's a pity but what we could have your luminous assistance on the bench, at our quarter sessions! All I can tell you is, however, that if Mrs. Uppercrust, of Greville Abbey, *does* believe her son to be in love with Lady Cobham, or lady anybody else, she never was more plaguily mistaken in her life!"

"Why, what can you possibly know about the matter, Mr. Massingberd? Lady Cobham is one of the prettiest young women in England. Her portrait might have been in the Book of Beauty if Sir James would have allowed it; and at Naples ——"

"At Naples I have little doubt, my dear, that Vesuvius exhibited a new flame in her honour! But depend on it no Englishwoman, however pretty, has the smallest chance against those jades the French, who, from the days of Sterne's *grisette* till now, have such a deuced winning way with them, that ——"

"You fancy Lord Greville attached, then, to some one at Paris?"—interrupted Mrs. Massingberd, coming anxiously to the point.

"No, I don't fancy any such thing,—I know it!—Fred's letters have talked of nothing else these three weeks past!"

"That is the reason, then, you have been so vastly cautious never to shew them to me!"—cried Mrs. Massingberd, little suspecting that her husband's caution arose from his desire to con-

ceal from her knowledge certain pecuniary demands on the part of his son and heir, connected with his engagements in the Rue Grange Batelière.

"Fred seems amused beyond measure at finding the sanctity of the demure, decorous young Earl of Greville melt away like wax in the sun, under the bright eyes of one of their tiptop *femmes à la mode!*"

"A married woman!"—interrupted Mrs. Massingberd, dropping her work and taking off her spectacles. "How dreadful!—My dear Mr. Massingberd, *do* tell me all about it!—But how came it that Julia said nothing of all this?"—

"The Cobhams were only two days in Paris, and are beetle-blind, I trust, to all such indelicate little affairs. Fred assures me that even Lady Greville saw no more of what was going on, than if she had passed under Paris in a tunnel!"

"Poor woman! I really feel for her!" sighed Mrs. Massingberd, with a hypocritical elevation of her hands and eyes.

"What! after behaving so like a brute to your poor, dear, simple, unoffending Julia?—No, no,—she has only got her deserts! She chose to debar her son the right use of his faculties, and so he has taken to the wrong one. A couple of years hence, when he comes of age, Lady Greville will be trotted off from the Abbey to make way for a family of threadbare French adventurers, who will help the young man to make ducks and drakes of his fine fortune, and laugh at his folly when they have come to the bottom of the money-bag!"

Even the maternal ire and neighbourly indignation of Mrs. Massingberd were almost appeased by so lamentable a picture. Her resolution, however, was taken. It would have required virtue more heroic than she possessed or than Lady Greville deserved, had she abstained from enjoying the triumph of such an occasion. Having extracted, therefore, from her husband with the art which most women possess, even when old and ugly, the details contained in the successive letters of her son,

away she drove, on the morrow, to Greville Abbey, on old Massingberd's express understanding that she required the horses for a neighbourly visit to the vicarage.

An answer of "not at home" would probably have been dispatched to the well-known Hill Hall carriage, as it entered the antique gateway of the vast courtyard which might have inspired awe in a less determined spirit; but *there*, just issuing from the stables, stood the barouche and four of Lady Brooks, a fatal announcement that morning visitors had been already admitted.

All, therefore, the Countess could do in the way of insulting the mother of the detested Lady Cobham, was to treat her with the most formal civility; and, having desired that Mrs. Massingberd might be shewn into the state drawing-room, a cold, pompous, magnificent apartment, she resumed her friendly leave-taking with Lady Brooks, in the snug, comfortable, morning room opening to the lawn, in which they had been chatting over a recent revolt in

the courtyard that the car
coronets and supporters, a
fooled with tints of crimso
stood there, putting out th
whited-brown equipage an
understood how she was trea
however, to be cool; and c
sphere could favour such a re
of the frigid state-chamber
never exposed to the cheerin
or air, in the midst of which
in her grey bonnet and shaw
a marmozet chained to the bl

But she sat contented, for
turn was coming. The
with which Lady Greville ad
her, as the carriage of the lad

twinkled in her eyes,—victory sat upon the curls of her towy toupée. The Countess of Greville might be the greatest lady in the county;—but at that moment, *she* had the best of it!—

Provoked beyond measure, meanwhile, that her previous insults were not resented, and that she was forced to receive her at all, Lady Greville looked as if she could have killed the intruder; but resolved, as in nobility bound, to kill her with the golden bodkin of affability. She inquired with the most measured politeness after Mr. Massingberd, and every thing and everybody else connected with Hill Hall;—then began talking county politics on the strength of the intelligence just communicated by Lady Brooks, with a degree of queenly dignity rendering it exceedingly difficult for the country neighbour to digress from the corporation of Squeamington in Oxfordshire, to the Hotel de Rostanges in the Rue St. Dominique.—But Mrs. Massingberd's resolution was stout, and she bided her time.

"I trust," she observed, when the Countess

had enlarged to the utmost upon the extreme friendship evinced by Lord Brooks in the care of the borough interests of the house of Greville,—"I trust it will not be *very* long before we have Lord Greville himself amongst us again to assist in these anxious duties."

"I beg your pardon," replied Lady Greville, abruptly. "My son has not the smallest idea of returning to England. It may be months first,—it may be years."—

"I am truly sorry to hear it," replied Mrs. Massingberd with an elongated face.

"My son has derived so much advantage from his sojourn on the Continent, that I wish him to make the tour of Europe before he finally settles in England." (The tour of Europe, the Countess thought, would sound like a threat of eternal separation, when repeated by Mrs. Massingberd in her next letter to Cobham Park!)

"I am sure, I trust, you may never have cause to regret his Lordship's long alienation from his native country,"—said Mrs. Massingberd, in a solemn tone. "At *his* time of life—"

"At his time of life, it is natural that young men should desire to see something of the world," interposed the Countess, with *hauteur*. "The late Lord Greville, having had occasion to regret through life that he had become too soon his own master, chose to prolong the minority of his son beyond the usual limit. Hugo has consequently less to render peremptory his residence in England, than other young noblemen of his years."

"That is certainly *some* extenuation," observed Mrs. Massingberd, mysteriously;—"some *little* extenuation!"—

"Besides," added Lady Greville, scarcely noticing the interruption, "Greville has a decided preference for foreign society."

"I am only too well aware of it!"—answered Mrs. Massingberd, in still more lugubrious accents.

"From the time of our quitting England," pursued Lady Greville, intent only on speaking daggers to the mother of the presumptuous Lady Cobham,—"I could scarcely prevail upon

him to shew proper attention to my English friends. It was only at *my* suggestion, indeed, that he continued to keep up with them the ordinary forms of acquaintanceship."

"*That* I can scarcely wonder at, considering the peculiar claims upon his time," observed Mrs. Massingberd, with increasing significance; "for I understand that the family spent the winter in Italy."

Lady Greville did *not* quite understand the *deduction;* the lady of Hill Hall seemed a little more addle-pated than usual.—"In short, I look upon him as wedded to Paris," she resumed, in order to give Mrs. Massingberd time for the disentanglement of her ideas.

"Not exactly to Paris," said the malicious grey marmoset, affecting an indulgent smile. "Indeed, I was not aware that matters were so far advanced as for the wedding to be talked of. My son assures us that, though a few indulgent friends believe Lord Greville to be engaged to Ma'mselle Nangiss, the majority are of opinion his real attachment is to Madam Roast Anje."

"Mademoiselle de Nangis?—Madame de Rostanges?" ejaculated Lady Greville, not immediately seizing the names as pronounced by the Oxfordshire squiress, and perplexed by the indistinctness of her reminiscences of Paris, save those connected with the Oxfordshire squiress's daughter.

"I allude to Madam la Marquise de Roast Anje!" repeated Mrs. Massingberd, her eyes brightening as she saw that her double-barrels had not missed their aim; "and to her sister, Ma'mselle Eugénie de Nangiss."

"I had the pleasure of being introduced to them both in Paris," faltered Lady Greville, striving to retain her self-possession.

"I understand, they are charming women," observed Mrs. Massingberd, gathering herself up into reserve, now that she knew information would be demanded of her.

"But surely Mr. Frederick Massingberd does not imagine,—does not insinuate,"—said Lady Greville, gasping for breath, and unable to articulate the question she dreaded to hear an-

swered, while Mrs. Massingberd, instead of kindly anticipating her wishes, assumed exactly the same dignified composure affected by the Countess herself, on her first entrance into the saloon;—"your son does not positively say," cried Lady Greville, at length, impatiently forcing herself to be explicit, "that Greville has entangled himself in—in any disgraceful attachment?"—

"By no means," mildly replied Mrs. Massingberd. "Ma'mselle de Nangiss is a well-born young lady, I presume; and though a catholic, and brought up no doubt in habits very different from what one might desire in a wife for one's son,—above all, a son placed in so responsible a situation as Lord Greville,—yet I have heard no particular objection raised either against her family or her character."

"Her character!"—reiterated the almost agonized Lady Greville.

"And I have no doubt, my dear ma'am," pursued Mrs. Massingberd, growing familiar as she watched the disturbed countenance of her

victim,—"I have no doubt that should Lord Greville bring you home this foreign daughter-in-law, (for which the predilections to which you just now referred, cannot fail to have prepared you,) you will find her little less amiable and companionable than any one of the young English ladies of high descent and accomplishments whom he might have selected to become Countess of Greville."

This last taunt was lost upon the astounded mother. Absorbed in deep and bitter reflexions, she was retracing all the circumstances of her brief sojourn in Paris,—all the details of her transient acquaintance with the family of Rostanges,—all her groundless jealousies of Lady Cobham,—all Lord Greville's duplicity with herself!—She took no further heed of the visitor whom, half an hour before, she had treated with such elaborate formality. She scarcely recollected that a Mrs. Massingberd remained in the room,—that a Mrs. Massingberd existed in the world!—

Engaged?—about to be married?—to a

foreigner, a Frenchwoman?—One who—h no! such a marriage was impossible! How w it to be borne?—or rather, how was it to prevented?—

Rising abruptly from the gilded fauteuil which she had been seated in solemn st opposite to her visitor, Lady Greville begam trace, with hurried footsteps, the vast area the gorgeous saloon in which she had chosen receive Mrs. Massingberd, in order to imp upon Lady Cobham's mother by an awful sh of dignity.—And to what was she now degrade —How miserable a specimen of the weakness human nature did she afford;—governed by master passion,—her moistened brow and co pressed lips affording tokens of the grievo emotions struggling in her mind!—

Had Mrs. Massingberd possessed force character to enter into the torments of such trial, she would almost have pitied Lady Gr ville. But hardness of heart is more insep rable from narrowness of mind than most peop allow; and, after several vain attempts to obta

a few civil words at parting from the woman she had come expressly to drive out of her senses, the malicious old lady curtsied herself out of the room, and went on her way rejoicing.

CHAPTER III.

A quel théâtre va-t'-il aujourd'hui?
Quel divertissemens prépare-t'-on pour lui?
Où soupe-t'-il? Quels sont ses convives?
S'en ira-t'-il toujours avec des ducs et pairs
S'ennuyer en cérémonie?
Lui permet'-on de voir la bonne compagnie?
DELILLE

"HERE she is at last, I protest!"—mutte old Massingberd, when, the following morni soon after breakfast, the Greville Abbey carri drove up to the gate of Hill Hall. "I was hopes we had seen the last of her!—What earth can bring the woman here at this untim hour?—Well, my dear, haven't you the sp to say 'not at home' to the lady, of your o

condition of life, who insulted your poor, dear, simple, unoffending Julia?"—

Mrs. Massingberd neither answered nor stirred. Satisfied that her husband's abhorrence of the Countess would carry him hobbling out of the room before Lady Greville made her appearance, she had little fear that her visit to the Abbey of the preceding day would be brought to light, with all its treasons and malignities. As she expected, the skirts of the old gentleman's flowered dressing-gown, whisking through an opposite door, were alone visible to the Countess when, after due announcement, she entered the room.

No attempt at affability *now*, — no insolent pretensions! — Humiliated, saddened, almost overwhelmed, it was clear that she had passed a sleepless night; so heavily had the hand of care laid its leaden weight upon her usually passionless brow.

"I fear you will think me an intruder," said she, in a low hurried voice, to Mrs. Massingberd, treating her almost as if she mistook her for a woman of sense and feeling. "I feel that

I have been remiss lately in attentions towards you. Mistakes — painful mistakes, — which I could hardly explain without vexation to both have led me into—but we will talk no further of it To be candid, I am here in the hope of obtaining further information upon the subject on which we were conversing yesterday. If it were no taking too great a liberty, I would ask the favour of being allowed to see Mr. Frederick Massingberd's recent letters to his family."

"Liberty!"—"Favour!"—a liberty taken, favour asked of the lady of Hill Hall by the lady of Greville Abbey!—Mrs. Massingberd had the baseness to feel inexpressibly gratified.—

"I fear," said she, discreetly lowering her voice lest it should reach the adjoining library "that, as my son corresponds solely with his father (who is very scrupulous on such points), will be impossible for me to comply with your ladyship's request. I am conscious indeed that I have already done wrong in unguardedly betraying the confidence reposed in me."

"You will at least not refuse to tell me," said Lady Greville, pale with anxiety, "your own

conviction concerning this unhappy business? Do your infer from your son's letters that Hugo is engaged to marry Mademoiselle de Nangis; or do you rather believe that he only entertains a criminal attachment for her sister?"

"*Only* entertains!"—repeated the decorous Mrs. Massingberd, with becoming horror. "Does your ladyship really mean that you would prefer Lord Greville being engaged in a criminal intrigue, to believing him engaged in marriage to a virtuous young woman?"

"The one evil at least is retrievable!" replied Lady Greville, who had no time to lose in hypocrisy. "But you have not answered me?"—

"Your ladyship must excuse me. I am really no great judge of such delicate questions," replied Mrs. Massingberd, primly. "I know so little of the world—particularly of the great world—*more* particularly of the French great world!"—

"But Frederick Massingberd is a man of the world!" cried Lady Greville, impatiently. "He lives exclusively with my son"—at a less painful moment she would have longed to add—"*on* my son."

Lord Greville's foolish engagement
girl,—and that he now talks of Lor
foolish passion for a French *woman*.
tioned, in a letter which we received
ing, some races that are about to
after which, he says, he shall return
glimpse of the London season;—for
(so his lordship, your son, is called
intimates) that 'Grev is going to
summer in Normandy with the peopl
got hold of him.'"

"I am satisfied!—I have a thous
to offer for the information you ha
me,"—said Lady Greville, abruptl
ring for her carriage. It was in vai
Massingberd entreated her to prolo
"Mr. Massingberd would be in sh
chaon would be served in a mom

kingdom perhaps about to be taken from her; that she might collect her scattered thoughts, and dispatch by that day's post a letter to Lord Greville, calculated to startle him into a sense of his folly.

To write as she felt, was a thing foreign to the habits of Lady Greville; to write *to her son* as she felt, a weakness she had never indulged, even when he was an Eton boy! On the present occasion, therefore, there was little fear that she would burst forth into demonstrations of the storm raging in her bosom. On the contrary, though she sat down to write with a hand trembling so violently that her pen scarcely left a trace upon the satin paper, the faint lines contained only expressions of affection, embodying a request that Greville would return to England with the least possible delay, as she was suffering under a recurrence of the nervous disorder which had necessitated her removal to Naples the preceding year.

No reproaches,—no invectives,—no accusations of deception practised upon her,—no allusion to his attachment. "Come to me, my

dearest Hugo,—come to your suffering moth
ere it be too late!" wrote Lady Greville. An
she knew that unless her son were changed i
deed, *such* an appeal must be irresistible.

For a moment, she felt inclined to have th
information of her illness conveyed to Lor
Greville by the hand of Anodyne the apothecar
rather than by her own. Such a missive wou
unquestionably prove more startling. Bu
though Anodyne was quite as well prepared
swallow any dirty order issued by the Cou
tess, as the Countess's grooms and housemaids
swallow the nasty potions prepared for them
Mr. Anodyne, so that he would have announc
her ladyship to be dying of the plague or t
cholera, had these disorders suited her ladyshi
convenience, Lady Greville judged it inexpedie
to place him in her confidence. Like other p
tentates of modern times, she had not fai
in her ministers to intrust them with any du
she could perform with her own hand.

The letter was accordingly written, di
patched, and on its way to the Hotel des Prince
bearing the superscription of "*très pressé*," th

it might be forwarded should Lord Greville be in the country, at the very time when Frederick Massingberd, (little suspecting the mischiefs created by certain episodes in certain letters to Hill Hall, requiring an extension of his credit with Laffitte) was puffing his cigar into the face of St. Sévron and the Duc de Clermont.

On the following day, unable to support his banishment from the society of the Hotel de Rostanges, to that of the mere sportsmen and would-be sportsmen of the least sportsman-like nation in the world, Greville returned, immediately after the races, to Paris.

His unexpected arrival was welcomed at the Hotel de Rostanges with a cry of joy.

"We are *not* to visit you, then, at Chantilly to-morrow?"—said Madame de Rostanges, apprehensive that the party at the Hotel de Bourbon was broken up.

"I am come to Paris solely to remind you of your engagement. I return to-morrow."

"How kind of you,—how considerate!" exclaimed the Marchioness. "And to think that we might have missed you!—I have been only

—inquired Greville, conceiving, from t
plicity of her dress, that she was about t
to the Théâtre Français,—the only thea
quented by the ladies of the Faubourg.

"Our friends are always happy to recei
replied Madame de Rostanges. We ar
to the Hotel de St. Pierre."

"You ought to apprize Lord Grevi
terposed Mademoiselle de Nangis, "
will have to support the *ennui* of a d
party,—the Saturday *boston* of old Mad
Rostanges."

"The Marchioness resides, then, w
daughter?" inquired Greville, intent onl
the beautiful face on which his eye
riveted; while Sophie proceeded to e
that the Marquis, being one of the *hal*

Lord St. George, who were at that moment quaffing Lord Greville's Chambertin to his health, amid shouts of laughter and piquant allusions, to have witnessed with what delight he was proceeding to a dowager party in the Faubourg; composed, according to Lord St. George's former description, of two quinquets, a few glasses of *eau sucrée*, and old women, male and female, *à discrétion*.

The Marquise de Rostanges, a woman venerable alike from age and character, occupied an *entresol* over the brilliant *rez de chaussée* of the Hotel St. Pierre. According to the French custom which unites the mother and only child till death does them part, this distribution had been made on the marriage of Claire de Rostanges with the Duc de St. Pierre; and, unsatisfactory as such arrangements prove in England, in France they are felt to contribute to the happiness and respectability of all parties.

The Marchioness, a woman of serious habits, was never seen in the gay assemblies of her daughter; nor was the Duchess invariably pre-

sent at the sober parties, uniting weekly round the old lady persons of her own age and opinions. But there never passed a day of which some portion was not devoted by Claire to her mother. Amid all her gaieties, all her dissipations, *that* duty was never neglected; and it was perhaps owing to the restraining influence of that grave mother's precepts and example, that, notwithstanding the coquetry of Madame de St. Pierre, and the dangers to which it exposed her, she was still worthy the praise lavished on her by her cousin Sophie, as the best of wives and mothers.

The dowager, on the other hand, obtaining from her daughter's society the enlivenment of which she stood in need, experienced no temptation to intrude into gayer scenes unsuitable to her age. Nothing more rare, indeed, than to see a Parisian fête disfigured by the presence of a woman advanced in years. No palsied dowagers, as in London, dishonouring the name they bear by the exhibition of their wrinkles, their rouge, and their unreverend weakness for the things of this world! Satisfied

that every age has its appointed pleasures, and reconciled by the deference of their families to resign the frivolous dissipations of the world, they retire with decency from the stage, to make way for a younger generation.

"I fear you were scarcely aware into what a cabinet of antiques our dear Sophie was introducing you?"—said the old Marchioness, when courteously welcoming Lord Greville. "But for her presence here, and that of Eugénie, we should almost forget the existence of youth and beauty. You are very kind to come and assist us in retaining the remembrance. What news do you bring from Chantilly?—what of the sport?—what of my daughter?"

Lord Greville, with prompt good breeding, supplied to the cheerful gracious old lady the details she demanded; and as they sat talking apart, the Marquis de Rostanges, who was engaged at profound whist with the Princesse de Chaulieu and two peers of France, (whose bald heads had probably escaped the perils of the first revolution,) looked up to salute Lord Greville with a friendly sign of the hand. At the

three *boston* tables occupying the remainder of the sober but elegant little saloon, no one was tempted to neglect the interests of the game to gaze at the newly arrived party. They took it for granted that it was some part or portion of their usual circle,—their unvarying circle. Strangers never entered there. All present were united among themselves by ties of consanguinity,—friendship,—or the old acquaintanceship so well replacing both. They had formerly assembled round the Marchioness in the Rue St. Dominique; they now assembled round her in the Rue de Varennes. There was her uncle the Bishop of A——; there was his brother the old Count de Nangis, guardian of Sophie and Eugénie; there were the elder branches of the houses of Castries, Mortémart, Caraman, Vaudreuil, Gontaut, Cossé, Noailles, Galifet, and others of the legitimist party, in whom Lord Greville fancied he could discern a refinement of manner and air of distinction now almost extinct.

There was something in the intonation of their voices, characteristic of persons trained

from infancy in observance of the gentler courtesies of life. There was something in their countenances indicative of the exercise of intellect in conversation, rather than in research. No deep furrows resulting from reflection,—no intellectualization of the eye from habitual self-interrogation. But, in their place, the shrewd glance,—the rapid smile,—the intelligent play of countenance, — consequent upon perpetual representation on the stage of the world;—the roundness and polish produced by continual friction against each other while borne like pebbles along the current of life;—and the fluency engendered by talking for half a century with those talkers *par excellence*, who, whatever may be their *esprit de conduite*, are without rivals as regards *l'esprit de conversation*.

Among the grey heads and withered faces of this venerable assemblage, the beauty of Madame de Rostanges fascinated the attention of Greville, as if seen for the first time. The fine oval of her face, the transparent purity of her skin, the lustrous beauty of her auburn hair, the symmetry of her striking figure—enhanced

rather than impaired by a certain air of languor and indolence, imparting feminine grace to every movement, seemed doubly conspicuous when thus contrasted with the angular features and sallow hues of age. There was something supernatural in her beauty; — she seemed a being of another sphere; — and Greville stood watching the varying reflections of light upon her pearl-like complexion, and in the depths of her expressive eyes, till his enthusiasm became perhaps somewhat too manifest.

"Of what are you thinking?" — said she, motioning him to take a place beside her on the sofa to which she had repaired, in order not to disturb the tranquillity of the card-players. "Nay,—do not look so dreadfully alarmed!—If you are meditating some frightful crime, keep your secret. I will torment you with no indiscreet inquiries. But, to say the truth, your countenance is that of *une âme en peine.*"

"Rather that of *une âme en béatitude!*" replied Greville, in a low voice.

"As little beatific as possible!" replied Sophie,

smiling, "You look overawed by the gravity of your position; — as much out of place as some young Colonel of the days of Louis XIV., when paying his court in the solemn circle of Sa Solidité, Madame de Maintenon.—Do you not feel that you have no business here?"

"Out of place in any circle of which you form a part?"—cried Greville. "Till your inquiry disenchanted me, I was beginning to fancy myself one of the coterie, — a segment of the circle!"—

"You want fifty years of the proper age," cried Madame de Rostanges. "Have a care,— or you will find your hair begin to whiten!"

"If not one of the coterie, then, one of the family?" persisted Greville.

Madame de Rostanges paused a moment, as if doubtful of his meaning. "*We* you know," said she, evidently mistaking him, "are connected with this house by twofold ties of family affection. Our week would scarcely seem complete, without an hour on Saturday nights devoted to *cette bonne tante!* Look at Eugénie!"

she continued, pointing to Mademoiselle de Nangis, who was engaged in conversation with the Papal Nuncio, and two or three high-bred old Frenchmen, who, as the youngest of the party, affected the gallantry of devoting themselves to her entertainment. "Eugénie protests she is never better amused than in this house, where she is worshipped as the type of everything that is good, gracious, and beautiful."

"*That* surely need afford no distinction in the eyes of Mademoiselle de Nangis," said Greville, warmly. "I have yet to make acquaintance with the circle in which she is considered less highly."

The colour rose to the cheeks of Madame de Rostanges. "How strange," cried she, "that though ever ready to gratify *me* by these praises of my sister, you give *her* so little reason to suppose you alive to her merits!"—

"I fancied myself complying with the customs of the country," observed Greville, somewhat embarrassed." Mademoiselle de Nangis is, however, fully aware of my respect, my admiration—"

"You are mistaken!" interrupted Sophie. "It is in vain I constantly point out to her,—not your merits, for of these she is fully aware,—but your deep devotion. Eugénie assures me you have other views,—that she has no share in your stay in Paris,—that—"

"And *you!*"—burst in a concentrated whisper from the lips of Lord Greville.—"Do you, in honesty and truth, believe that she is more to me,—that she can ever be more to me,—than your sister? I love Eugénie—because she is yours. I would peril my life to serve her; but it is for your sake,—for *yours*, who are dearer to me than my own life,—my own salvation. Forgive me, if I offend you. You have brought this explanation upon yourself!"

He paused,—unprepared for the alarming effect produced by his rashness upon Madame de Rostanges. Too much startled for utterance, every vestige of colour had forsaken her cheek. Yet she dared not resent his address. The slightest demonstration would, in that quiet assembly, have attracted attention. Oppressed

as she was, she did not even dare request window might be opened, so peremptory we the habits of the place.

"Speak to me,—reassure me,—one wor only one word!"—whispered Greville, terrifi by the overpowering nature of her emotio "Whence arises this agitation?—Have I excit your indignation by my frankness,—or m I—*dare* I—hope that——"

"Hope nothing,—but that I may learn pity and forgive!"—faltered Madame de R tanges, finding it urgent to put some limit to h imprudence. "It is unworthy of you to comp me to listen to avowals which I dare not reser lest I bring down upon *you* the resentment the confiding friend you have outraged,—c myself the ridicule of society! So long as yc choose to remain by my side, I am at th mercy of your insults. Be generous, therefor and leave me to myself, that *I* may be gene rous and learn to forget your offence."

There was something too earnest in the lo measured tone of Madame de Rostanges t

admit of reply or remonstrance. After a moment, Lord Greville rose from his seat and crossed the room, as if to examine a cast from the beautiful bust of Henri V., executed by Monsieur de Nieuekerke, which ornamented one of the consoles. Nothing in the movement likely to attract notice! The forms of French society do not authorize a man to devote his attention to one woman throughout the evening, after the fashion of English flirtations; being bound, as member of a coterie, to address his civilities in succession to all the ladies present.

Meanwhile, though conscious that, according to the formalities of the old-fashioned circle into which he had seen fit to intrude, he had no right to retire till the departure of those by whom he had been presented, Lord Greville resolved upon retreat; and stood watching the entrance of the servants with trays of orgeat and lemonade, in hopes of seizing the occasion to quit the room unnoticed. When lo! just as he was congratulating himself on having reached the door in safety, he was pounced upon by the

Princesse de Chaulieu, who had cut out at whist.

"*Pour le coup, je vous tiens, mon cher milor!*" cried she, taking him unceremoniously by the arm, and leading him back to a chair. "*Comment! vous alliez vous esquiver sans me faire votre cour?*—You fancied me deeply engaged at cards?—and so I was!—but now, I am at your service for the next half-hour; or rather, I trust you are at mine.—I have a thousand questions to ask you—a thousand reproaches to make you. How come you to be here at all, when all the world is at Chantilly?—and why do you invite all the world to dine with you at Chantilly, and leave *me* out of the party?—Ay, ay! of course you will be proud of the honour. But it is too late! *Je ne prétends pas servir d'arrière pensée à un beau milor tel que vous!*—Pray tell me, is it true that when the Duke of Orleans's horse came in loser yesterday, the people shouted for joy?—Ah! you think they only intended to cheer the winning horse! You fancy they always applaud on such occasions!—*à d'autres!*

I can promise you that the peasantry of Chantilly are legitimists to a man;—and well they may, considering all they owe to the poor dear unfortunate Duc de Bourbon.—As my cousin St. Sévron was saying,—by the way, I dare say you saw St. Sévron at the races?—You visited, perhaps, his charming little hunting box in the forest of Chantilly?—Poor soul!—I am sure he must be sadly *ennuyé* there,—alone, like Robinson Crusoe in his island!—Crusoe would have been bored to death if he had not had so much to do to find himself in food, and take care of himself against the cannibals. But St. Sévron has nothing to do, unluckily,—except look out for a wife; and there sits my little friend Eugénie, who will have nothing to say to him! *Je commence à me douter que cette chère Eugénie nous fait des infidélités en faveur de la vieille Angleterre,—ou bien l'Ecosse.*—I always forget whether you are English, Scotch, or Irish?—nay! I could sometimes fancy you French, you speak our language so well, and direct it so powerfully to our hearts. *Ah!*

pardon! I did not think it in the *bavardage* of an old woman like myself to bring a blush to your cheek!"—cried the Princess, checking herself on discovering the embarrassment of Lord Greville's manner as he listened to her rambling discourse.

"My dear brother," she continued, turning suddenly to the Duc de Monthémont, one of the venerable flirts of Mademoiselle de Nangis,—"admire, I beg, before it fades away, what you proposed the other day to send as a curiosity to the *musée des antiques*,—the blush of a *jeune homme comme il faut!*"

"I am prepared to admire anything said, done, or intended by Lord Greville," replied the courteous old gentleman. "But I fear, *ma bonne sœur*, as you have been *affichéing* him in a tête-à-tête for the last ten minutes, that your indiscretions have to answer for the blush.—My sister will give you a sad opinion of the coquetry of our grandmammas!"—he continued, turning towards the Earl.

"Madame la Princesse has been kindly in-

vesting me with the name and privilege of a Frenchman,"—he replied, after an effort to rally his spirits. "Allow me to prove my gratitude and nationality by gallantly taking her defence."

"*Volontiers!*"—replied the old Duke. "I am proud to accept such a *compatriote*. We are too sadly divided among ourselves not to welcome the reinforcement of foreign auxiliaries."

"Yet with such gratifying tokens of social union around me," rejoined Greville, glancing at the little cheerful chatty assembly, "I cannot fancy you in need of succours."

"The very *esprit de coterie* imparting so great a charm to our society, forms the bane of our well-being as a nation," replied the Duc de Monthémont. "The subdivision of parties in France is fatal to the stability of things. Thus hampered, a government is tied down like Gulliver, by a thousand petty ligatures; and it is easier to combat a single giant, than an army of pigmies."

"Do not listen to the Duke," interposed

Mademoiselle de Nangis, noticing the extreme embarrassment of Greville, and attributing it to the cavalier manner in which he had been seized upon by the Princess and made over to the prolix civilities of her brother. "In the first place, because he is talking politics,—a forbidden theme; in the second, because he is finding fault with his countrymen,—which is rank treachery. Just now, when I was presuming to praise *la jeune France* for its innocence (amid much guilt) of the sin of courtiership,—guess what he replied!"—

"That the public men of the day were as vilely addicted to adulation as the red-heeled courtiers of the Œil de Bœuf!" cried the old gentleman, firmly; "but, that instead of offering their homage to the throne, they toady vulgar opinion.—Look at our Chambers,—look at our Journals!—What baseness of adulation to the public!"

"Nay, not a word against the public!" cried Mademoiselle de Nangis, perceiving how much relief she afforded Greville, by taking the

conversation out of his hands. "But for the influence of that mighty tribunal, what great actions would be performed,—what chefs-d'œuvres executed?"—

"Do you count for nothing the inspirations of genius, the hopes of immortal fame?" remonstrated the gay old Frenchman.

"Immortal fame is the award of posterity,—the public succeeding the public of to day, which you affect to despise,"—persisted Eugénie. "For my part, I have unbounded respect for masses. In this room we have a charming little handful of people; and the spangled circle in the Œil de Bœuf was no doubt equally *aimable*. But it would be presumptuous to weigh either the one or the other against the three hundred million inhabitants of the terrestrial globe, enlightened by the experience of forty centuries."

"*Mais, ma chère, tu fais là, je crois, du La Mennaisisme!*" cried the Princesse de Chaulieu, laughing heartily. "Was it in Italy you picked up this horrible jargon?—If you

had taken such opinions with you packed in your imperial, they must have been confiscated crossing the frontier;—Mademoiselle de Nangis and her revolutionary notions would have been inserted in the Emperor's list of prohibitions!—— You, at least, thank Heaven, *mon cher Monsieur de Grévil*, are not accountable for her transcendental liberalism.—*You* do not belong to the *canaille* who say with Montaigne, *puisque nous ne pouvons atteindre la grandeur, vengeons nous à en médire!*—You are one of *us*,—a connecting link between king and people, conceding to the one the respect you exact from the other!"

"*Intermédiaire entre le roi et le peuple comme le chien de chasse entre le chasseur et les lièvres!*" cried Mademoiselle de Nangis,—satisfied that no one present would trace the profane origin of the quotation. "Do not look so shocked!" she continued, addressing Greville in a lower voice; "but thank me for my *échauffourée* as a successful attempt to divert the attention of these good people from your strange confusion of countenance. Either you have lost your fortune

in the betting stand at Chantilly, or,—but I will not perplex myself by assigning causes for your bewilderment!—The dear good Duke has lost all recollection of your incoherence, in his horror at *my* apostasy. As to his sister, I doubt whether she will allow Sidonie to remain my friend."

"You have so many and such attached friends," cried Greville, "that few people can so well afford to——"

"Hush, hush!" interrupted Mademoiselle de Nangis—"this forced *empressement* is even worse than your abstraction. But the whist party is broken up, and we are at liberty to take our leave. Monsieur le Duc!—are you sufficiently in charity with me to fetch me the scarf that hangs by my sister's chair?"—she continued. Then, while the polite old gentleman shuffled off in execution of her commission, delighted to be the chosen cavalier of so young and fair a creature, she again, and in a more hurried manner addressed Lord Greville. "You are ill," said she, "or some painful event has befallen you. Do not deny it!—your coun-

tenance betrays the disturbance of your feelings."

"You are mistaken,—believe me you are mistaken," faltered Lord Greville.

"Only one word!"—persisted Eugénie, as she saw the poor Duke preparing to return with her scarf trailing from his arm. Can I be of the least use,—the least comfort to you?—My friendship—such as it is—is yours. Dispose of me,—you have too much sense to mistake my meaning!"—she continued, as a vivid flush suddenly overspreading the brow of Lord Greville inspired a fear of the possibility of being mistaken. All explanation, however, on the part of the Earl was out of the question. The gallant old Duc de Monthémont was again by their side; and Monsieur and Madame de Rostanges were in the act of taking their leave.

"*A Dimanche donc, n'est ce pas?*"—inquired Eugénie, hurriedly addressing Lord Greville; "*et à Chantilly!*"

"*A Dimanche—à Chantilly!*"—he replied, in a hesitating tone, doubtful whether under all the circumstances, the party might still take place;

still more uncertain whether he dare approach Madame de Rostanges to offer his usual attention of escorting her to the carriage. Lost in irresolution, he loitered beside Mademoiselle de Nangis, inexpressibly pained by the evident indisposition of her sister.

"I fear she has over-fatigued herself with her ride," said Monsieur de Rostanges, in reply to the officious inquiries with which the Duc de Monthémont accompanied his good night; and at that moment, a glance at her sister's face seemed to enlighten Mademoiselle de Nangis. She understood all,—the origin of Greville's emotion,—of Sophie's indisposition.

"Offer me your arm," said she to Lord Greville, in a low but peremptory tone, "or all these people will form the same conclusions as myself."

Startled by the abruptness of her manner, he obeyed in silence. In silence, they followed Sophie and her husband to the carriage. Lord Greville had not even presence of mind to utter a word in reply to the diffuse parting compliments

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CHAPTER IV.

On gouverne les hommes avec la tête ;—on ne joue pas aux échecs avec un bon cœur.

CHAMPFORT.

IT was some relief to the overcharged feelings of Greville that, on his return to his own apartments, there was no Fred Massingberd, — no noisy, sneering "best fellow in the world," to irritate him with idle questions. He was not in the humour to be amused with slang, or patient with persiflage. Never had he been so eager for the relief of finding himself alone. Yet

the invectives which he lavished upon himself during the first quarter of an hour of this much coveted *tête à tête* seemed to render the enjoyment problematical. After cursing his own rashness, his own precipitancy, however, he found some apology for his brief madness in the recollection that he had been hurried into his ill-timed avowal by the joy of finding himself in the presence of Sophie,—Sophie, kind, beautiful, and encouraging,—after two tedious days of absence. Then, after calling to mind, moment by moment, and incident by incident, the unlucky scene by which his relations with the family of Rostanges seemed likely to be brought to a close,—after living over again in imagination those happy moments when he stood contemplating the object of his intense admiration, till carried away by the charm of her attractions,—he felt that all had been inevitable,—all predestined;—that were the scene to be renewed, even with his present experience of its

evil issue, he must again yield to the same overmastering impressions.

For some time, all he could think of was Sophie,—the gentle, confiding, Sophie,—alienated from him for ever by his deep offence,—Sophie resentful,—Sophie unhappy!—By what right had he introduced one painful emotion into her peaceful soul — one hint of shame into her blameless existence! He recalled to mind the look of distress contracting her features as she listened to his mad avowal; the deep paleness by which her features were overspread when, during her husband's parting colloquy with the Duc de Monthémont, he caught a glimpse of her face. But not one gleam of encouragement could he gather from the recollection! Not one indication of weakness on the part of Madame de Rostanges! Not a look, not a gesture to afford hope of future relenting! He had broken for ever the ties uniting him with the family, — he had pro-

nounced his own sentence of dismissal f
regard !—

It is not wonderful that such anti
aggravated by the wild and vague sugg
an over-excited mind, should drive a m
experienced in the ways of love and foll
to despair.

For some time, he paced the roo
madman, as if to exhaust the irritabil
feelings. But by degrees, his frenzy
self to rest; and flinging himself into a
sank into a reverie of deep despondenc

To his train of bitter and bewilderin
tions, at length succeeded a more r
frame of mind. The secondary event
memorable evening recurred successive
recollection. He could even scarcely f
smile at the singular coterie whose mo
circle he had selected to be the scen
imprudence; a circle a thousand time
terized in his hearing by Roche Ay

other of his fashionable French associates, as "*fossil*,"—antediluvian,—the most decorous of all the strongholds of Parisian decorum!

At the close of these reminiscences, grave and gay, came wandering by a figure like an angel, bearing the image of the sister of Madame de Rostanges. At any other moment than the one in which they reached his ear, the insinuations of the Princesse de Chaulieu, nay of Sophie herself, that a preference was entertained for him by Mademoiselle de Nangis, would have touched him deeply. The dissipations into which Greville had been introduced by the companionship of St. George and Fred Massingberd, if they had in some degree corrupted his mind, had not yet hardened his heart; nor had his affections been prematurely frittered away by the flirtations of a London season. Inexperienced in the withering lessons of fashionable life, he saw no triumph in being the object of an attachment, a source of misery to the gene-

rous heart that loved him; and as no *roué* co panion was at hand to point out the amuseme to be extracted for himself out of the delusio and sufferings of Eugénie, all he desired w that the Princesse de Chaulieu might be c ceived in her conjectures.

It might be that his mind was still under t influence of gratified vanity, but never befo had he rendered such complete justice to t attractions of Mademoiselle de Nangis. Dur her conversation with the two old people fr whose importunities she had released him, the was something as piquant as impressive in expression of her countenance. She had beem eager to defend him as her sister had be prompt to condemn; and how could he be oth wise than grateful for such unmerited generosit The superiority of Eugénie over her sister elevation of character, he had never doubte he was beginning to fancy she might equal excel Madame de Rostanges in warmth of hea

Had Fred Massingberd been present to claim his share, as in their days of earlier intimacy, in the meditations of Lord Greville, the dandy would probably have found cause for merriment in this twofold preference; nay, perhaps have accused his friend of transcending him in libertinism, by so singular a combination of attachment as between the two sisters. At present, however, Greville was not prepared to admit that Eugénie was more to him than an object of admiration. There was something in the loftiness of her character that almost overawed him. He felt humbled before her as by the presence of a superior being: while in her feebler sister, he saw only a gentle, fragile being, relying upon others,—he dared not say upon himself,—for tenderness and support.

The morning light found him still meditating upon these dilemmas,—lost in surmises of what would be the course pursued on the morrow by Madame de Rostanges. Would she,

like a woman of the world, affect to treat the matter as a jest,—a blunder,—to be overlooked unless repeated; or resent his conduct with all the bitterness of wounded feeling? The question remained undecided in his mind when, long after the dawn of day, he retired to rest.

He was still asleep,—still dreaming,—dreaming that he was wandering in some desolate island, like Prospero's or Haïdee's, with *two* fair spirits for his ministers,—bearing, as nearly as the ethereal images of dreams ever resemble the material beings, their prototypes, the forms of Sophie and Eugénie,—when he was roused by Giacchimo's announcement of a visitor. "Monsieur de Rostanges was waiting for my lord in the adjoining room!" A visit at that unusual hour seemed to forebode urgent and important business; and he was preparing to rise in haste, with the conviction that some dreadful explanation was about to take place

between himself and his injured friend, when his door was slightly pushed open.

"May I come in?"—asked the tremulous voice of the Marquis, in anything but a tone of resentment. "You are not so great a coquet I trust, as young Albert de la Roche Aymar; who, when staying at Les Etangs, will never allow me to enter his room while he remains in the '*simple appareil d'une beauté arrachée au sommeil.*'"

"I should have been with you in a moment; but if you will excuse the disorder of my room, am equally pleased to receive you here. Giacchimo, a chair for Monsieur le Marquis!" cried Greville, inexpressibly relieved by this jocose *entrée en scène.* "But what brings you out so early?"—

"*Un caprice de femme!*" replied the Marquis, leisurely seating himself; "I am sent across the Carrousel in the glare of a June morning, merely to tell you that my womenkind will not hear of going to-morrow to Chantilly."

"On what account?" demanded Greville, in some trepidation.

"I have already told you—*un caprice!* They have discovered that the weather is too fine; that to travel twenty miles in the heat of the day to see three or four horses flogged along a green field, is not worth the sacrifice of their complexions. They talk of sun and dust;—they talk, in short, like children;—for all this they might have foreseen ten days ago, when the party was first proposed."

"They reckoned perhaps upon rain when they accepted my invitation," observed Greville, in a tone of pique.

"Don't imagine, however, that I shall submit to their disappointing us!" cried the Marquis, warmly. "I have set my heart upon the races!—I have not been at Chantilly these five years,—in fact, not since my marriage; and Sophie has never been there in her life.—Go, therefore, I am determined she shall!"

"Not contrary to her inclination, I trust!" interrupted Lord Greville.

"Exercise your own eloquence, then!" cried the Marquis, eagerly. "Up and dress, *mon cher!*—Accompany me home. A word or two in the ear of Eugénie, over whom you have unlimited power, and all will be arranged!—I will wait for you. My cabriolet is at the door.—You can breakfast at our house."

Lord Greville could do no otherwise than assent; but he hoped to find, during the completion of his toilet, some pretext for not accompanying Monsieur de Rostanges. He felt disagreeably as well as disgracefully situated, with regard to the man who distinguished him with such brotherly friendship. Throughout their intimacy, the Marquis had treated him with more confidence than he desired; as if equalizing the difference of age between them by recounting scandals of himself and others, such as would have elicited envy and

admiration from any young Frenchman
Greville's age; his favourite theme being
blindness of husbands, and the triumphs
enterprising lovers. To entertain the most
mote suspicion that such a ridicule could att
to himself, was an outrage to his young wif
which Rostanges never dreamed. He l
perfect confidence in Sophie. He trusted
her religious principles,—he trusted to her s
respect,—

> He trusted to the blood of Loredano,
> Pure in her veins!

and consequently indulged in pleasantries whi
came with a very bad grace from his lips to t
ears of Lord Greville.

"Do I incommode you?" said he, while t
Earl proceeded in his toilet, wishing him at t
other extremity of the earth. "If not, I hav
thousand questions about Chantilly which I v
prevented asking last night by my interm
able rubber. Tell me, *mon cher*, what cou

tempt our friend St. Pierre, — man of the world as he is,—to let young Achille de Cerny accompany his wife down to the races? St. Pierre's blindness really abuses the permission which husbands have to remain blind. Have a care, or you will certainly cut yourself if you flourish your razor in that careless manner! By the way, next to the folly of the Duc de St. Pierre, the thing I least understand in the world is, the habit you Englishmen have of being your own barbers. I could as easily make my own boots, as *faire ma barbe!*"

It was in vain that Greville attempted to direct the conversation into a more suitable channel. Scarcely a word uttered by the Marquis, from the moment of entering the apartment of Lord Greville, to that when he ushered him into the saloon of the Hotel de Rostanges, but served to aggravate the annoyance and confusion of his young friend.

"I have brought you Greville, *bon gré mal*

gré, to add his representations to mine upon your *inconséquence* in declining your visit to Chantilly!" said the Marquis, pushing Greville towards the table where Eugénie sat writing.—"Greville is indignant. He assures me he has made the most princely preparations; and will not hear of his *terrines de Nérac* and *aspic d'écrevisses* being thrown away. Speak to her my dear Greville!"—he continued, while his companion stood silent and with downcast eyes beside the table, deeply shocked by the change wrought by the lapse of a single night in the countenance of Eugénie.

"Since *your* eloquence has been unsuccessful I have little hope of persuading Mademoiselle de Nangis," said he, at length, in a faltering voice.

"On this occasion I own she is yet more obstinate than my wife!" cried the Marquis.—"At one moment, I had all but persuaded Madame de Rostanges to alter her determination;—when—"

"Lord Greville is aware that it is impossible for us to enjoy his hospitality," interrupted Eugénie, in a grave and steady voice, which did not place the delinquent more at ease. "He will not renew an invitation which he knows to be unacceptable."

"What the deuce is all this?"—cried the Marquis, to whom the alteration of Eugénie's manner was unaccountable. "Explain to me, Greville,—for you are of an age to understand better than I can pretend to do, a change of the barometer of a female temper from fair to foul, without any perceptible variation of the atmosphere. Nay,—Eugénie,—my child,—why these gestures of impatience?—If Greville outraged your punctilious sense of delicacy by rendering his attentions last night more ostensible than belongs to the strict code of French etiquette,—forgive him!—He does not understand our customs. He will offend less boldly another time. No answer?—You are both

silent,—both embarrassed!—In God's name, end this foolish child's play, and be friends!"

A single look, — a momentary glance, — launched at that moment by Mademoiselle de Nangis towards Lord Greville, brought as rapid a flush to the cheek of the old man, as the one detected the preceding night between Greville and her sister, had brought to her own. There was a peculiar inflection of contempt in the look, according ill with the relative position which he had chosen to assign them.

"You received him almost as a stranger!"—cried Rostanges, directing alternately his earnest gaze upon Lord Greville and his sister-in-law. "Sophie refuses to see him!—What am I to understand by all this?—Greville!—have you not a word to plead in your own favour,—not a syllable to offer me in explanation?—*What* is your offence?—I am beginning to feel that I was perhaps to blame in bringing you hither;—perhaps—perhaps inexcusable!"

"You are inexcusable *now!*" cried Eugénie, starting up from her occupation as she noticed the growing agitation of Rostanges;—"thoroughly inexcusable,—in pretending to play the mediator in a woman's quarrel, which you only aggravate by your interference. Leave your friend Lord Greville to me," she continued,—"for I protest to you, dear Adolphe, that if you pretend to plead another word in his favour, I will not extend my gracious pardon to him for the next six months!"

"I am satisfied—I see perfectly how it is!" cried the Marquis, with the air of a man relieved from painful apprehensions. "A lover's quarrel,—*après le beau temps, la pluie!* I confess, for a moment, I—but it were unpardonable to give utterance to such extravagant chimeras. Eugénie, child!—I insist upon it that you instantly give your hand to Lord Greville,—my preserver, as far as regards his humane intentions. *Sans rancune!*—Offer him your hand, and let all be forgotten!"

Mademoiselle de Nangis instantly complied She neither blushed nor averted her eyes a she placed her hand in that of Greville. Bu there was something in her calm self-possessio more dispiriting to him than anger or embar rassment.

"And now that peace is concluded," cried th Marquis, rubbing his hands with the utmost ela tion, "go to your sister, dearest Eugénie, an tell her that *her* ratification is indispensable."

To the great surprise of Greville, Mademoi selle de Nangis proceeded deliberately to th door for the fulfilment of her brother-in-law' commission.

"I knew how it would be," exclaimed Ros tanges, the moment the door closed upon he "It was too bad of them to despatch me acro the Carrousel on so bootless an errand, whe they had never for a moment altered their inten tion of going to the races."

Lord Greville made no reply. Thoug affecting to fix his eyes with unconcern upo

the gloomy, garden level with the windows of the saloon, on the damp turf of which the withered flowers of a sickly acacia tree were fluttering down from the overshading boughs, his mind was engrossed by anxiety. He dreaded the arrival of Madame de Rostanges. If the emotions of the preceding night had produced so remarkable an effect upon Eugénie, what change might they not have wrought in her more delicately organized sister! If Sophie should prove unable to control her agitation as Eugénie had done! If by some outbreak of feeling she should betray herself and him! Nay, if *he* himself, on seeing her pale, dejected, suffering, should find it impossible to control the emotions which he felt stirring in every vein — throbbing in every pulse!

The door of the saloon opened. Greville dared not turn from the window, till an exclamation from the Marquis apprized him that Eugénie had re-entered alone.

"My sister begs me to assure Lord Greville,"

said she, replying to the inquiring looks of her brother-in-law, "that she shall have the pleasure of accompanying us to-morrow to the races."

"Bravo!" cried the Marquis; — "bravo, bravo!—I am beginning to think myself as able a diplomatist as Thiers—as clever a negotiator as Guizot!—*ça va—ça marche!*—To-morrow, my dear Greville, to-morrow we will make a day of it to be marked with white chalk in the calendar."

At that moment, Mademoiselle de Nangis advanced towards Greville, offering her hand, as if understanding that he was taking leave — "Farewell!" said she.—"*A demain!*"—

Accepting, and not unwillingly, this token of dismissal, Lord Greville gratefully returned the pressure of her hand. On quitting the room, he found that his own contained a narrow strip of paper, containing a few almost illegible words: —"Find a pretext to put off the party. I have a right to claim this at your hands."

Whether this peremptory missive were in the

handwriting of Madame de Rostanges or her sister, he was unable to determine. To obey the behest would be a relief to *him*, as it was a duty towards those whose re-acceptance of his invitation purported only to tranquillize the suspicions of the Marquis. The difficulty lay in devising an excuse sufficiently plausible to prevent their renewal.

Though Greville had desired that his horses might be sent after him to the Faubourg, his interview with Eugénie had been so brief that it did not much surprise him, on reaching the court-yard, to find neither horses nor servants in attendance. The cabriolet of the Marquis stood in the remise awaiting his orders: but he preferred making his exit on foot.

Just, however, as he reached the offices of the Etat Major, in the Rue St. Dominique, he perceived his own cabriolet driven towards him at a furious rate; and while preparing to express his displeasure to the groom, saw that Giacchimo occupied his place in the vehicle

It was difficult to guess what brought the courier so much out of his orbit, or for what purpose; and at the pace at which the cabriolet was proceeding, it was even difficult to arrest their attention for the inquiry. He did, however, succeed in hailing them. In a moment the horse was checked, and Giacchimo, leaping out, presented a letter to his hand.

"Something of importance, eccelenza! The words *très pressé* determined me to proceed immediately to your lordship. It is only ten minutes since Monsieur de Rothschild's courier brought the letter to the hotel." But every syllable of the explanation was lost.—Having hurriedly broken the seal, Greville was now absorbed in the perusal of his mother's memorable epistle!

"Post horses to my dormeuse in half an hour, at the Hotel des Princes!" said he, addressing the astonished courier, when he reached the concluding words of the letter. "You paid up everything, I fancy, before we went to Chan-

tilly?—Settle whatever remains. The passport was *visé* for England last week, and will still serve! — Go! — let all be in readiness for my departure by one o'clock."

Then, hastily assuming the courier's place in the cabriolet, he retraced his way to the Hotel de Rostanges without further explanation, leaving the amazed Giacchimo sacréing in the middle of the pavé; heartily wishing he had been less assiduous in conveying the *très pressée* English letter to his *très pressé* English Lord.

But though thus prompt and decided in issuing his orders, poor Greville, already sufficiently disturbed in mind by the events of the morning, was now almost frantic with agitation and perplexity. The incoherent tone of Lady Greville's letter convinced him that her indisposition was even more serious than she had chosen to avow. He might perhaps arrive too late to behold alive that best and fondest of mothers! Every hour, every minute was precious. By exciting the zeal of his servants,—by distributing

money on every side,—he might, however, perhaps sufficiently hasten the usually sluggish movements of the French postilions; and after having made his explanations and adieux to the family of Rostanges, not a moment further should be lost. So absorbed was he, in short, in the idea of his mother's danger, that every feeling of embarrassment connected with Sophie or her sister was forgotten; and he re-entered the Hotel de Rostanges almost breathless with emotion,—but with emotion wholly unconnected with even the dearest of its inmates.

Wholly preoccupied, he pressed forward unannounced into the saloon. The Marquis was still there, occupying at the writing-table the place which Eugénie had quitted. But a rapid glance round the room shewed him Mademoiselle de Nangis engaged in earnest conversation with her sister, under the awning of one of the windows opening to the garden.

"I am come to take a hurried leave of you, previous to my departure for England," said he,

unceremoniously addressing them. "I have this moment received news of the dangerous illness of my mother."

The Marquis de Rostanges uttered an exclamation of surprise and horror. The two ladies remained silent.

"I would fain express my regret that this precipitate departure must prevent my fulfilling my engagements to-morrow with the friends to whose goodness I am indebted for every happy moment I have enjoyed in France," faltered Greville, overpowered by emotion. "But I feel that I have lost all power of expression. —The sudden shock has thoroughly unmanned me!—When she quitted Paris, my mother was completely restored to health; — and now, — suffering, — in danger, — perhaps no more! — Yes,—perhaps before I reach home, she may be gone for ever!"

The countenance of Greville bore such ample token to the deep-felt sincerity of his expressions of grief, that the kind-hearted old Marquis, has-

tening towards him, wrung his hand with the tenderest sympathy. But Eugénie and her sister, regarding all that was passing as a scene got up in compliance with the terms of their letter, could scarcely repress the contempt with which they regarded the unparalleled dissembler. The attention of Rostanges was luckily too much engrossed by offers of service to Greville connected with his hurried journey, to notice the singular indifference with which his wife and sister contemplated the sufferings of their friend.

"In six-and-thirty hours I shall reach London," — was Greville's reply to the circumstantial inquiries of Rostanges. "Only four days will have elapsed between the writing of that letter, and my arrival at home. But in so critical a state as my mother's, four days are an age! It is impossible to conjecture what changes may have taken place."

"But you will write to us?" persisted the Marquis. "You will surely write and apprize us of your safe arrival, and of the state in which

you find Lady Greville?—Remember, I beseech you, that we take in all that concerns you, more than even the interest of friendship! You are one of us, my dear Grévill. We love you as our brother,—as our child!"—And the tears gathering in his eyes, attested the warm sincerity of the kind old man.

"I will write!" was all Greville could reply. Absorbed in his filial afflictions, it did not suggest itself to his mind that his sorrow could appear to Madame de Rostanges and her sister the result of studied duplicity; and he felt that even his offences of the preceding night scarcely excused the contemptuous indifference with which they stood contemplating his distress.

Their demeanour, however, so far hardened his heart as to give him courage for the word farewell. The Marquis, deeply moved, accompanied him through the suite of rooms into the hall, with one arm encircling his waist, as he would have embraced a son or brother. But, as Greville reached the door of the saloon, turning

a smile of derision, on that c
sorrowful indignation.—To
object of hatred,—to the oth

CHAPTER V.

Je le mène un peu roide ; mais ces petits bonshommes ne sont-ils pas trop heureux qu'on leur inspire des manières de cour, et le bon gout pour les habits, les meubles, les equipages; enfin, qu'on leur apprenne à se ruiner ?

REGNARD.

"STARK staring mad, by Jupiter!" cried Fred Massingberd to Lord St. George, when, after the arrival of hamper after hamper, and *bourriche* after *bourriche*, at the Hotel de Bourbon Condé on that eventful Saturday, in preparation for the morrow's fête, the last coach brought a packet from Greville, containing intelligence that he had already started for England !—

"I bet you a pound poor Grev has received

a hint from that prosy old Rostanges, to make a clear coast of it!"—observed St. George, flinging aside his cigar.

"I bet you *ten* he has gone to ask his mother's consent to marry that dark-eyed jade of a sister!" cried Fred; and, true to the code of English dandyism, they lost, in the interest of a bet, all consideration for the welfare of a friend.

"Those Rostanges people have been playing a monstrous knowing game with Grev!" resumed Massingberd. "While trying to catch the married sister, he has been caught by the single. With you or I, or any fellow versed in the ways of the world, it would, of course, have been no go; or one might have even made the wife, and consequently the husband, pay the penalty of their cunning. But Grev has swallowed both bait and hook;—and though he writes this cursed stuff about his mother's being at death's door, and all that sort of thing, take my word for it, 'tis only because he's ashamed of telling us the truth."

"I'm glad he has not been ashamed to send us reinforcements for the cellar!" cried St. George, stretching himself, and yawning. "To do Grev justice, he does things *en prince* where money is concerned; which, considering how damned badly he was brought up, is much to his credit. Apropos to credit,—I see he has also sent you *carte blanche* with Rothschild to book up for him here—"

"Ay!—and a pretty drawback with it! We are to do the honours to-morrow to all that stiff-necked crew of St. Sévron, Clermonts, and Co."

"What a bore!" cried St. George; perfectly satisfied to accept the hospitality of Lord Greville, but not his commissions. "We might have had capital fun with Cerny, Roche Aymar, and others who shall be nameless, if there had been no women of the party. However, we may perhaps be able to make the Duchess understand, to-morrow at the races, that she is not wanted. When these people see that Grev is

really off, they will have tact enough to be off too."

In this agreeable supposition, he was justified by the fact. The Comte de St. Sévron was too well acquainted with the habits of the gentleman *qui jurait bien et qui payait mal* to introduce his friends the Clermonts into such company, unchecked by the presence of Lord Greville. A ready excuse was found for their absence; and the entertainment projected in honour of three of the most elegant women in Paris became, in the sequel, a noisy and disreputable orgie.

Meanwhile, Lord Greville proceeded on his journey,—a prey to a thousand conflicting emotions. The generous trustfulness of his nature rendered it impossible for him to surmise a deception on the part of his mother; and in order to secure his credulity on future occasions, the Countess took care to pursue her system of imposition. From the period of despatching her letter to Paris, she had kept her room;—no great sacrifice,—for in her agitated state of mind

she was scarcely in a mood to be intruded upon by visitors;—till confinement from air and exercise, combined with sleeplessness and irritation, at length imparted to her appearance the air of indisposition needful to attest her imposture. Nay, before Lord Greville arrived, she was *really* ill,—really in want of the services of Mr. Anodyne,—had she felt confidence enough in his skill to accept them.

"How is my mother?" burst from the lips of Lord Greville, addressing the porter's wife, who came curtseying to the lodge-gates of the Abbey to admit his carriage; and whose smiles of welcome to her young lord ought to have rendered the question superfluous.

"My lady is very poorly," replied the woman, still smiling and curtseying,—unaware of the nature of Lord Greville's journey, and believing herself to afford the first news of the Countess's slight indisposition.

"Go on!—for God's sake—go on!" cried he, impatiently, to the postboys. And never before

had the Earl been aware of the immensity of his park, and the tedious distance intervening between the lodge and the Abbey.

The moment he alighted, however, the countenance of his old family butler re-assured him. Before a word was spoken between them, Greville saw that his fears had exaggerated the danger, or that his mother had been unnecessarily alarmed on her own account.

"Mr. Anodyne assures us, my Lord, that her ladyship's disorder is merely nervous," replied the old man, hobbling up stairs after the Earl, towards the Countess's dressing-room. "Mr. Anodyne has seen her ladyship to-day, and considers her very much better."

Thus prepared for a state of convalescence, it did not surprise poor Greville, when he entered his mother's chamber, to find the invalid quietly seated in her arm-chair, certainly in no danger of immediate dissolution. She was pale, indeed —paler and graver than usual;—for though her heart throbbed within her at sight of her son,

Lady Greville was one of those whom habitual dissimulation enabled to conceal every trace of emotion. Even when pressed in the arms of that only child,—even when she found his warm tears upon her cheek,—she preserved her gentle composure; probably because she felt at that moment, only curiosity to ascertain whether her interference had been in time to preserve him from the twofold perils of love and matrimony.

"If you did but know how you have alarmed me!" cried he, when, seated beside her, with her hand clasped in his, and his eyes riveted upon her countenance, he discerned that, though pale and suffering, her illness could not be of a *very* serious nature. "You grow nervous, dearest mother, by living too much alone."

The Countess's cheek became slightly suffused. In this careless remark, she fancied she saw an indication of proposing an addition to her family circle.

"You were never ill during your stay

abroad," resumed Greville; "because *there* you had cheerful society around you."

Mechanically, his mother withdrew her hand. "Believe me," he continued, "you would enjoy better health did you enter more into the world, or at least surround yourself with the company of younger and stronger persons."

"I have scarcely been a fortnight settled at the Abbey," replied Lady Greville, coldly—"During that time, I have been engrossed with the business of the estate; but it has not prevented me,—that is—it did not prevent me, till my recent illness," she added, checking herself, "from receiving my friends and neighbours."

"But one's country neighbours are such infernal bores!"—exclaimed Lord Greville, bringing a new tinge to his mother's cheek by this involuntary assumption of the phraseology of Fred Massingberd.

"They are the persons with whom we are more or less required to associate," she repl[illegible]ed,

still seeing a peculiar motive for every word uttered by the Earl.

"Less, rather than more, I trust!" cried her son.—"I have not the least taste for the company of the Oxfordshire Squires,—mere haystacks,—mere growers of prize turnips and fatteners of prize sheep.—With all due deference for their vocation, I am very glad to eat their sheep when fatted, but not in their company."

"Sir Thomas Hardy can scarcely be called a haystack, or Lord Brooks a mere grower of turnips. In manners and accomplishments, they vie at least with any member of your vaunted French society with whom *I* am acquainted," cried Lady Greville, scarcely able to repress her indignation.

"Certainly — certainly! — it was not to old Brooks or old Hardy I was alluding," cried her son, unable to understand the motive of this unusual outburst.

"Lady Brooks, too, is as agreeable as she is handsome," pursued the Countess; "and the

Hardys have grown up into very pleasing girls."

"Have they?—I am glad of it," replied the Earl.—"In that case they will be a great addition to so wretched a neighbourhood as ours. And the family at Hill Hall?—How are the Massingberds?"—

"Much as usual, I believe."

"And pray what has become of that stupid Lady Cobham, and her brute of a husband?" he continued, bringing a feeling of shame to the heart of Lady Greville, when she reflected upon her former misapprehensions.

"Surely you need not make any inquiry of *me* concerning Lady Cobham!" said she. "Have you not been living in the closest intimacy at Paris with her brother?"

"You little know Fred Massingberd, mother, if you fancy him aware of the existence of the Cobhams, unless when they are actually in his presence."

"But you *have* been living in unabated inti-

macy with him?" persisted Lady Greville, to whom the Cobham part of the question was perfectly immaterial. "This Oxford chum of yours, whom you once forbad me to call Mister, I may still be permitted to call your friend?"—

"You shall call him what you like, that is not too ungracious towards a man who is no one's enemy but his own, and at times a mighty pleasant fellow," replied her son, carelessly.

"At all events," persisted the Countess, "he has still your confidence?—You have frequented the same society?—You have enjoyed the same amusements?"

"Not altogether," replied Greville, unsuspicious that his mother had an ulterior motive for her persevering cross-examination. "My habits, you know, are more domestic than Fred's. *I*, for instance, have found enjoyment in quiet family parties, which to *him* would have been about as agreeable as a Quaker's meeting. It is to you I am indebted for a taste for such

pleasures," he continued, leaning affectionately towards her. And though Lady Greville wished, perhaps, at that moment, she had dispensed with the lessons from which he derived a penchant for chimney-corner happiness shared with a French wife, either belonging to himself or the Marquis de Rostanges, she looked forward through the mists of her perplexities to a time when the domestic pleasures of Greville Abbey, shared with a young Countess, née Hardy, or née anything but Nangis, might still be retraced to her precepts.

"You will find this place in great beauty, my dear Hugo!" said she, anxious to change the conversation. "Dowdeswell has executed admirably all we left him to do. The new road from the north lodge is cut through Misterton Hanger, and has given us a beautiful peep towards Ditchley. The lake, too, has been cleared and deepened; and you will be delighted to hear that several fine land-springs were discovered in the operation, which will double the

supply of water. After Paris, what a relief to you to enjoy the quiet and beauty of your own woods and fields!"—

Lord Greville assumed an acquiescent countenance. But, unversed in dissimulation, he gave little hope of turning out so accomplished an actor as might have been expected of his mother's son.

"As soon as I recover my health and spirits," she resumed, "we must make it a point to receive our friends. The Abbey has been too long closed, — people are beginning to complain.—The county wants to know more of you, my dear boy. You have redeemed the pledge given at the tenants' dinner, (of which you reminded me at Naples,) to be here before the summer was over; *I* must redeem mine to society, — by presenting to it, as I feel proud of being able to do, a representative worthy the dignities of the ancient house of Greville."

Rather to conceal his surprise at this set

speech, than from gratification at her comp[illegible] p
ment, Greville took the hand of his mother, a[illegible]
pressed it to her lips.

"You have become an adept in Fren[illegible]
fashions since you left me!" said she, cold[illegible]
withdrawing her hand. "I shall find you[illegible]
conclude, a perfect lady's man!"

"I should be glad that you found me a p[illegible]
fect anything!" cried her son, gaily. "But [illegible]
don't imagine my manners can have deriv[illegible]
much polish from the society of my friends [illegible] S
George or Fred Massingberd."

The Countess was on the point of broachi[illegible]
the subject nearest her heart, when Grevil[illegible]
tranquillized concerning her health, began
grow conscious of want of food and re[illegible]
after his unintermitting journey; and for t[illegible]
present, she was obliged to forego her inquirie[illegible]

Nor, when they met again, did she find
easy to satisfy her curiosity, without hazardin[illegible]
a more direct appeal than was consonant wi[illegible]
her mode of policy.

Lady Greville loved to acquire information by indirect means, and to circumvent rather than oppose. Had she indeed elicited by direct interrogation from her son that he was attached to a married woman, or contracted to a single one, she must have met the avowal with such displeasure and so positive a prohibition, as would inevitably produce a breach between them. Having snatched him from present danger therefore, she resolved to trust to her own ingenuity for further insight into his secrets.

The only son of a widowed mother, and the widowed mother of an only son, however brilliant their worldly position, are not much to be envied. The selfishness of human nature too often renders such a tie, a bitter bondage; and never had Greville been so conscious of his own dependence as now, when, having flown to his mother on the first indication of her illness, sacrificing every personal inclination for the prompt performance of the duty, he found her

still dissatisfied. Vexed to see him so miser
out of spirits,—to find him ride off, mor
after morning, on pretence of visiting the
provements, or wander out into the woods
pretext of rabbit shooting, though she as
tained that he invariably returned without
charging his gun,—Lady Greville could
refrain from twitting him with his taste
solitary reveries, and his altered state of m
and feeling. Instead of allowing him to purs
unnoticed, habits which at *his* age could not
to bring their own remedy, she was perpetu
prying into his thoughts, and questioning
occupations.—Her usual tact seemed to have f
saken her. The great trial was come. I
heart had evidently escaped her; and she co
not at once reconcile herself to the loss.

Nothing would have been more natural th
to assign a motive for the absence and p
occupation of the young Earl, in the listlessn
arising from a sudden transition from the s
and movement of Paris, to the stillness a

seclusion of Greville Abbey. But the irritated mother would not accept so poor a subterfuge. She could forgive herself neither the blindness of her infatuation concerning Lady Cobham, nor the infatuation of her blindness concerning the family of Rostanges. She had been a dupe,—her own dupe,—the dupe of her own self-reliance; and for once, the irritation of the woman got the better of the prudence of the guardian.

Meanwhile, her system of espionage and cross-questioning was becoming insupportable to the Earl. Never were they ten minutes alone in each other's company, that he did not find her eyes watching his countenance in some opposite glass, while adverting to topics connected with his travels, such as she hoped would beguile him into self-betrayal. From whatever point their conversation started, it was sure to end in the Faubourg St. Germain; and Greville,—poor Greville,—who was labouring to drive from his remembrance all the illusive hopes connected

with the Rue St. Dominique, and to whom even a remote allusion to the family gave inexpressible pain, ended with shunning every occasion for a tête-à-tête.

His affection for his mother was diminished by perceiving how little she was touched by its generous warmth. Deeply as he had suffered during his hurried journey, he could not understand the insensibility with which she adverted to his promptitude in obeying the summons,—a promptitude which, aware that no danger had really existed, she regarded as the triumph of her own manœuvres, not as an evidence of his deep and heartfelt love. And thus, estrangement was springing up between them; and as nothing but filial tenderness had hitherto blinded him to the monotonous dulness of Greville Abbey, he became every day more sunk in depression, and more careless in disguising his discontent. Lady Greville began to apprehend that his Parisian attachment was deeper rooted than she had at first imagined; and that

he was planning some desperate resolution. But the more anxious she grew, the bitterer the annoyances she contrived to inflict upon her son!

Having discovered his aversion to a tête-à-tête,—an aversion created by her own mistaken policy,—she tried to diversify the scene by little dinner-parties, consisting of Anodyne and his wife,—Dr. and Mrs. Graves from the vicarage, —and other persons of a secondary order, equally come-at-able;—people of narrow minds and still narrower experience of the world,—having little or nothing to say, and saying that little or nothing in a manner that rendered it *worse* than nothing. Too courteous and too kindly to make his distaste for such society apparent to the parties themselves, it was to his mother on their departure that he ventured to submit his murmurs.

"None of the county people are yet returned from town," she replied. "Lord Brooks is only here now and then, when he

[illegible] The Harrys will not arrive till the end of the month:—then, we shall be able to do better. Next month I promise you a succession of brilliant entertainments in the Abbey."

It was not however a succession of brilliant entertainments that Greville wanted — it was tranquillity: it was to be left the master of his own time,—his own thoughts,—his own countenance;—the Abbey and independence would have sufficed. Despairing of obtaining this, he was beginning to watch the weather and to talk of his yacht, at the risk of bringing on a relapse of the nervous fever; when lo, a signal of release arrived from a quarter wholly unexpected.

"I have a piece of good news for you, my dear Mrs. Massingberd," cried the squire of Hill Hall one day to his spouse, about a fortnight after the arrival of Lord Greville. "I met Dowdeswell this morning at the justice meeting, who informs me that you are to hav[illegible]

grand doings this summer at the Abbey; public days every Monday, besides company constantly staying in the house. The lady of your own condition in life is beginning to discover, I suppose, that the linnet is growing too cunning to remain shut up in the cage alone with the boa constrictor. The flutterer won't stand still to have its wings clipped again, after being once allowed his liberty."

"Is that the newest intelligence Mr. Dowdeswell was able to afford you?" demanded Mrs. Massingberd, with a smile of superior information.

"Isn't it enough?—Why now, you know you will send off to town by to-morrow's post for a new bib and tucker to figure in next Monday at Greville Abbey!"

"*I* shall certainly never condescend to figure on public days at Greville Abbey, till I have been invited there to a private dinner-party," retorted the snappish old lady. "I don't pretend to determine, Mr. Massingberd, your sense of what is due to *you*—"

"I am sorry to say there is nothing due to me, except a year's rent from the Marsh farm and three quarters from old Hollings!" interrupted the squire, provokingly.

"You know very well that I allude to Greville Abbey."

"As regards Greville Abbey, then, which owes me nothing that I know of, except a grudge, which I have earned perhaps by my plain dealing, I would twenty to one sooner dine there on a public day than in a family party, just as I would sooner have a grain of arsenic mixed in my tank than in my wine-glass."

"Lady Greville is much obliged to you. It is perhaps because aware of your antipathy, that she spares you as much as possible all contact with her poisonous qualities, leaving you to derive information from her bailiff."

"Say agent—as a civiler word for my friend Dowdeswell," cried the old gentleman, laughing.

"Your friend Dowdeswell knows as much about the matter as you do. There will be no

public day next week at Greville Abbey, any more than at Hill Hall."

"Sorry to hear it, my dear! Ever since Dowdeswell's communication, I had been seeing visions of green fat, and dreaming dreams of goodly haunches!—But give me your exquisite reason, pray, Mrs. Massingberd, for being so positive.—Despotism is done for, my dear, even in the East!—The Sultan himself can no longer say black is white, and find a vizier to believe him.—*Why* will there be no public day?"

"Because Lord Greville is gone to spend a week or two in town."—

"In town?—I renounce my green fat without a murmur!—The lad should have thrown off in London a year ago; and we should never have heard a syllable about French madams or misses, or any rubbish of the kind. But how came the old dragon to consent?"—

"You had better ask her."

"It is more convenient, my dear, to ask *you*, who seem to be in her confidence."

"I understand your sneer, Mr. Massingberd. But you will scarcely dispute my authority when I tell you that Lady Brooks, who called here this morning on her way home from the Abbey, informed me Lord Brooks had carried off Lord Greville yesterday, at five minutes' notice, to give evidence on some parliamentary committee."

"I was sure it would require an act of parliament to get him out of his mother's clutches!" cried the squire, pretending to misapprehend her. "However, I'm plaguy glad to hear of his being in London; for Fred arrives there as to-day, and if the papers are to be believed, the fine folks of Queen Victoria's time get up as many balls and feastings in July as those of the Regent's did in June, or those of old George in the merry month of May. The young fellows may still find wherewithal to amuse themselves."

"Considering that Frederick has been eight months absent from England," said Mrs. Mas-

singberd, sternly, "I think it might be just as well if he came to pay his duty first to his parents."

"My dear, young men of the present day are not particularly fond of paying anything!" mumbled the squire.

"Lord Greville, however, made his way from Paris straight to the Abbey, in less than eight and forty hours."

"Please to add that his mother was forced to get up a nervous fever to flog him up to the winning post!—I dare say, my dear Mrs. M., if *you* are inclined to oblige Fred with a dangerous illness—"

"I content myself with the affection of my daughters, without troubling myself concerning the undutifulness of my son," observed the old lady, sententiously; "and have as little wish to see him at Hill Hall, as the Countess has that Lord Greville should ever quit Greville Abbey."

The cause assigned by Mrs. Massingberd for

Greville's abrupt journey to London, was for once the true one. A petition nearly concerning his borough interests requiring the evidence of Lord Brooks, the old gentleman, delighted to prove to the Grevilles the importance of the duties to which he devoted himself for their sake, chose to demand the sanction of the noble minor's presence and support.

The proposal was a godsend to Greville. Even the Countess had no reasonable objection to assign. She was beginning to fear, moreover, that her son, like the mother of mankind, might grow so weary of a tête-à-tête in the garden of Eden as to fall a prey to the first temptation. He might even, in a moment of despair, determine upon a precipitate return to Paris, and pronounce at once her sentence and his own. Compared with this, a visit to London, under the sage mentorship of Lord Brooks, was indeed a minor evil.

"I have one promise to exact of you, dear Hugo," observed the Countess, at the

ment of their hurried parting;—"that you will neither quit England, nor pledge yourself in a matrimonial engagement, without my sanction."

"Granted, my dear, good, anxious mother," cried the Earl, in all the elation of spirits consequent upon his unexpected release—"granted from my heart and soul!—Don't be afraid!—I shall only be a week absent, and will neither cross the Channel in the interim, nor bring you home a wife. Is it possible that you have any real apprehension of my committing matrimony in this way, at half a moment's notice?"

"I don't know that I entertained any *real* apprehension of your being drowned while you were at Eton," rejoined the Countess, regarding her handsome, animated son, at that moment, with genuine tenderness; "yet when did I ever refrain, on your return to school after the holidays, from renewing my strict prohibition against bathing?"

"I never till this moment was able to under-

stand," thought Lord Greville, as he jumped into the carriage and drove off towards Brooksfield Manor, "what it was that made me so passionately fond of the water!"

CHAPTER VI.

Il savait se mettre tout d'abord en des termes excellents; mais il se trouvait toujours au même point que le premier jour. Sa vie était un préambule éternel.

PAUL DE MUSSET.

LORD BROOKS was a harmless, fussy little man of a certain age, whom nature had stamped with insignificance, and the Heralds' Office with a peerage. He would have been well enough, small as he was, had he been content to remain as nature made him; but a certain nervous consciousness of deficiency, induced him to enhance his personal dignity by emphatic mysteriousness of carriage.

He seldom spoke out of a whisper,—was apt to harpoon himself to a friend's buttonhole and lead him into some remote corner to inquire whether it were likely to rain,—had his tailor's letters marked private and confidential,—and indulged in nods of the head as significant as the far-famed gesture of Lord Burleigh.

There are people in the world weak enough to be imposed upon by the pomposity of Hop-o'-my-thumb, when arrayed in the seven-leagued boots of the ogre: so that the pains-taking consequentiality of Lord Brooks was far from thrown away. He had adopted a pursuit, moreover, peculiarly appropriate to his pretensions, inherent and inherited. Lord Brooks had a prodigious taste for greasing the wheels of the great engine of the state. A mere subordinate, he fancied himself an invaluable party man; just as a candle-snuffer pretends to be an actor, but is content to snuff the candles, so long as people are content to fancy him one of the Roscii. Being no orator, (as Brutus is,) he

satisfied himself with lending his aid to ministers by active attention to the parliamentary interests of his county.

No man in England understood the science of boroughmongery better than Lord Brooks; and if he congratulated himself on his rare good fortune in obtaining, for so many years, the management of the parliamentary interest of his young neighbour of Greville Abbey, most people were of opinion that the troublesome charge could not have been undertaken by a political overseer better skilled in the art of voter-driving. It was a whim to which his lordship gave up his life as eagerly, as some men to collecting garden-bugs or classifying vermin; secure from being considered weak or trifling, so long as their hobby is dignified by a place among the ologies. Comporting himself, moreover, in his official calling with a turgid solemnity such as Lord Grizzle might have envied, he filled his place as well as another, as a fractional representative of that abstract quint-

essence or quintessential abstraction, called, by the courtesy of nations, the wisdom of parliament.

The senate—the senate in its material form, rather than as the type of the constitution—was the Temple of Jaggernaut in which his lordship bowed the knee. Instead of crying "a plague o' both their houses," *he* daily invoked blessings on both Lords and Commons! He would rather have found himself speaker of either the one or the other, than sovereign of the realm; nay, the privilege of British sovereignty which he most envied, was that of addressing the senatorial "lords and gentlemen" twice a year from the throne, in a strain of "taffeta terms precise," bold as the thunder of the property-room, and worthy the grandiloquence of the state papers of the celestial empire.

Parliament,—parliament,—he could talk of nothing but parliament! "Did they make a house?"—"Has the house divided?"—"Is the house up?"—"What majority?"—were the only

questions Lord Brooks ever thought of addressing to the friend who shook hands with him in the street. Even at his country-seat, his discourse was ever of the thews and sinews of his false god,—corporations and registrations,—votes and voters.—His society was regulated by the dial of his parliamentary interests. He bore with bores even greater than himself, if strong supporters on the hustings; and seldom gave away so much as a brace of pheasants or a pine-apple without some view, remote or proximate, to a general election. Happy the country, to sweep the crossings of whose constitution affords occupation so harmless to an elderly gentleman of Lord Brooks's importance.

Such was the dwarf Polonius who succeeded to Fred Massingberd in the task of bear-leading the Earl of Greville; enchanted to add this pleasing duty to that of shedding oil on the tempestuous waves of the corporation of Squeamington. Greville being still a minor, his lordship regarded and treated him as a boy; and as

they travelled up to town together, proposed to take him to Bellamy's, and put his name up at Brooks's and Arthur's, much in the tone that he would have promised Lady Cobham's little boy to take him to the Zoological Gardens.

"Between ourselves," whispered Lord Brooks, though as they were alone together in the carriage, it would have been difficult for a third person to intrude just then into his confidence, — "*between ourselves*, my dear young friend, it will be *just as well* that no one should be made aware of the *motive* that brings us to town!—Let the *world* suppose you are tempted by Almack's, or any other of the frivolous diversions of the youth of the age!"—

"But since the minutes of the committee are published—" observed Lord Greville.

"They are *never* correctly reported; and though *published*, seldom *read!*"—resumed the old gentleman, in the same mysterious whisper. "You will be printed into Lord Neville,—or *perhaps altogether overlooked.* As, however, your

sole object in London *is* to give your evidence, I recommend you, my dear young friend, to take up your quarters at one of the hotels at Charing Cross or Spring Gardens,—*as nearest to the scene of action!*"

Lord Greville, pre-determined to take them up at the Clarendon for a directly contrary reason, remained prudently silent.

"You need not *say* that I gave you a *hint on the subject*,—for people are too apt to assign unaccountable *motives* for one's advice;—but *I* recommend you to try Morley's!"—said Lord Brooks, in a still more confidential whisper. "Morley's is an excellent place for people who have business at the House."

That night, when Greville found himself comfortably established at Jacquier's, he could not but smile at Lord Brooks's selection of a house of call for stage coachmen, in order to place him within the jurisdiction of his own highly parliamentary residence, looking into St. Margaret's church-yard!—



offices in his favour; and on the morr
his arrival, the breakfast-table of the
covered with little pressing billets of i
Lady Louisa Clare sent him opera t
Lady Dawdle vouchers for Almack's,
Mary Macmichael an invitation to a bre
Lady Hardy an invitation to dinner. –
aloes, and cassia were offered to him
quarters.—

"See what it is to have a handle
name, and a fine rent-roll appendan
cried Fred Massingberd, who, having a
the Clarendon, according to his father'
tion a few days before, soon found h
the apartments of Greville. "St.

are in some danger of being torn to pieces by the dowagers!"

"I will make over their civilities to you, if you will accept them!" replied Greville. "I was congratulating myself on knowing nobody in town!"

"Thank you for my share of the compliment!" cried Fred. "But, tell me, Grev, —in the name of Providence, how did you contrive to slip your chain? So you were decoyed away from Paris on false pretences, eh?—It seems Lady Greville contrived to get a sham certificate, like a prima donna who wants to skip rehearsal for a party to Richmond!"—

"I do not understand you," replied Lord Greville, with rising colour.

"The deuce you don't!—Why, I mean that you found all well at home (*comme disent les épiciers*) when you returned to Greville Abbey?"

"I found my mother considerably recovered

from her indisposition," replied Lord Greville, *calmly.*

"Pho, pho, pho!—There was never any *more* the matter with her than with me!—It *was a sell, my dear Grev,*—a flagrant sell!—*My father's letters apprized me of the whole intrigue. By the way, my governor has turned up a trump.* He has not only booked up my Christmas bills, but, on the strength of a legacy from some cursed old maid of a cousin, put five-hundred into my pocket for a fresh start! To return to the nervous-fever hoax,—Madame la Comtesse was quite right to fire a great gun as she did, to bring you to! It would have been the devil and all, Grev, my fine fellow, if those people had hooked you!"—

"I am still at a loss to understand your meaning!" said Greville, as coolly as possible, while his blood boiled at the double insult. Yet, however disposed to resent Fred Massingberd's accusations, there was so much incontestible truth in his statements, that Greville

began to fear his credulity had been practised upon. "While you talk in this random strain," he continued, "I shall be afraid to ask you for news of my Paris friends."

"Wait till Achille de Cerny arrives, then; who is coming over for the Cowes regatta," replied Fred. "Think what asses those French fellows make of themselves, by their Anglomania! Not one of them knows a horse from a cow,—yet they must needs institute a turf!—Not one of them can keep his saddle over a grip,—yet they must needs attempt steeple-chases!—Not one of them can walk a mile,—yet, last year, we had half-a-dozen Frenchmen on the moors!—And now, by Jove, they are going to try a yacht club!—The exploits of our fellows at Cherbourg have driven them wild; and Cerny, who is squeamish in crossing the *Pont Suspendu*, fancies himself up to a cruise!—Think of Cerny in the Bay of Biscay,—think of Cerny in a stiff breeze!"

"And when does he arrive?" inquired Gre-

ville, trusting that from *him* at least derive authentic information concer friends in the Faubourg.

" To-day,—to-morrow,—next wee my soul, I don't know!—I think St. G me he had got a subscription at Al him. But what on earth will you do yourself in town, Grev," demanded t " You don't belong to Crockford's,— belong to the Travellers',—you don't White's,—you don't belong to anythi

" I belong to myself,—a person fo have a great regard,"—replied Grev ing. " Were I a club-man, like I should probably be far less my ow To-day I dine in Clarges-street, Hardys."

" Already set up as a target for one flaxen-haired cherubim of daughters!".

" Were I to put much trust in your Fred, I should have reason to be s vain," said Greville. " You would

believe that all the women in the world are on the watch to marry me!"

"And so they are!—To do you justice, you're pretty nearly the best-looking fellow in town," cried Fred, examining his friend. "Blin has done wonders for you,—and if you were but a trifle more *dégourdi*—"

"Come, come! spare my blushes," interrupted Greville, laughing—

"Hear me to an end! I was going to say there might be some excuse for that foolish woman in the Rue St. Dominique falling in love with your *beaux yeux*. But that if, instead of being five feet ten and shaped like the Apollo, you were as wry-necked as Prince Torticolis and as ugly as the devil, Greville Abbey and its thousands a year would still make an angel of you in London. I see what they are all at. But be on your guard, my boy;—keep a sharp look out or, by Jove, you will find a young Countess of Greville standing by your side in St. Georges' church before you are a month older."

"I rather think not," replied Greville, flattered against his better judgment at the idea of being an object of such universal courtship. "I have no heart to dispose of."

"Who asked for a heart?—Pin-money and jointure,—diamonds and rubies,—are very good substitutes, as times go, for sighs and sentiments," cried Fred. "And now, having wasted half a minute of our precious time upon those perfections of insipidity, the English Misses, come with me to Elmore's, and give me your opinion of my new hack."

Massingberd felt almost injured on learning that Greville had an appointment with Lord Brooks; and that, for the first time in his life, business must take precedence of pleasure.

"Lord Brooks?—What on earth have you to do with that pragmatical old ass?—Parliamentary business?—Pho, pho!—You'll have enough of that two years hence!"—cried Massingberd, waxing warm—

"Two hours hence, more likely," replied Greville; "for as the only pretence for my stay in town is this abominable committee—"

"Well! I suppose you must have your own way,—that is, I suppose you must have old Brooks's!—But don't you intend, even in London, to emancipate yourself from Oxfordshire?—Can't you have enough at home of the squiredom of your county without wasting a day in town upon such people as the Hardys?"

Lord Greville shrugged his shoulders. "The Hardys or others, *ça m'est egal!*" cried he. "There is nothing and no one in this great city of London likely to rouse me from my phlegmatic indifference."

Again, but vainly, did Fred offer his services as cicerone to the haunts and resources of the roué world.

"*Plus tard!*" was all he could obtain in reply.

"Better late than never," rejoined the Crock-

fordite, as he lounged off to the horsedealer's but he was beginning to fear that Grev wou turn out a spoony after all. There could i but two motives for such listlessness as th of the Earl,—to be in love or in debt. T latter contingency, so familiar to Massingber was clearly not the evil in the present case. was, therefore, only too probable that his Lor ship's heart and understanding were still und embargo in the Rue St. Dominique.

Meanwhile the dinner-party in Clarges-stre surpassed in dulness even the predictions Massingberd. The Hardys seemed to ma it their study to disgust him with the insipidi of an English family circle.

From an exaggerated idea of the shyness Lord Greville, Lady Hardy had impressed up her daughters that they must not alarm t timid youth with too much talking, or attentio too assiduous; as he was doubtless on the wat against all attempts for his captivation, and if

be caught at all, it was only by maintaining towards him a grave and careless reserve. The three poor girls, accordingly, received their important guest with three awkward curtseys,—accepted his invitations to drink wine at dinner with three silent bows,—and concluded their civilities by three anxious blushes when, immediately after coffee, Lord Greville rose to take leave. To remain among them another half hour was impossible. Sir Thomas had entertained him all dinner-time as an old English gentleman is too apt to entertain a young one, with a series of questions concerning his travels and pursuits that would have done honour to the catechisms of Pinnock: while Lady Hardy, overpowered by the happiness of having the great match of her county under the same roof with her daughters, sat mute and motionless, like other anglers, patiently watching the float for the first indication of a nibble.

Greville seized, as a pretext for so early a

departure, his engagement to a ball at the Marchioness of Wirksworth's, to which he had received an invitation through her ladyship's nieces, the Lady Dronelys; but the family dinner-party so completely deadened his spirits that he resolved on hastening at once to his hotel. In traversing Berkeley-square, however, the crowd of carriages round Lady Wirkworth's door attracted his attention; and on hearing, through the open windows, snatches of a favourite set of quadrilles, from Lucia di Lammermoor, associated with reminiscences of Paris, he determined to look in for a moment, at the hazard of deepening the dye of his *vapeurs noirs*.

The announcement of "The Earl of Greville," was instantly whispered from domestic to domestic up a lofty staircase, wreathed with roses, and crowded, like Jacob's ladder, with ascending and descending angels.

There would have been no difficulty in dis-

tinguishing the Marchioness, even without the inclination of the groom of the chambers towards the ear of a perpendicular lady in an inauspicious turban, standing directly in the doorway, as if by way of architectural support; for Greville saw in her a petticoated fac-simile of her brother, his mother's stately friend Lord Droneham. The frigid formality of the curtsey she vouchsafed him, was almost overpowering. Lady Wirksworth was a woman of some account in the fashionable world;—unexceptionable in her conduct and company,—a very model of social propriety; but she was hard and stiff as an alligator's tail. Not a word of welcome to the new comer,—not a smile of encouragement.—It was enough that she permitted him to be there. Of the *agrémens* of life, Lady Wirksworth knew nothing;—the art of pleasing was the only art beneath her notice.

Discouraged and abashed, Greville looked vainly round for a single familiar face. Cold looks of investigation were fixed upon the en-

trance of the stranger. As he was one whom no one appeared to know, no one cared to know him. A few of the young men lounging about, perceiving something in the cut of his Parisian coat that differed slightly from their own, set him down as a tiger; and poor Greville, apprehensive of making his retreat too precipitate could only fix himself with his back against the wall, till the conclusion of the quadrille enabled him to go in search of the Lady Dronèlys.

"Fred Massingberd certainly reckoned without his hostess in fancying that I should be *too* warmly welcomed in London!" mused the Earl, as, one after another, the beauties of the evening honoured him by a cold stare and went their way; and it was perhaps a repayal for their ungraciousness, that he began to play the critic in his turn, upon the slovenliness of their dress, and the ungainliness of their deportment. The room was ill lighted — the floor was mean. There was nothing of the brilliancy—nothing of the *air de fête* of a Pari

ball. People seemed to be there because they could not help it — not for any pleasure they found in the entertainment. The women wore their ill-set, ill-cleaned diamonds as if they would have considered it an act of coquetry to dispose them with taste; the men to dance, as if it were an act of derogation to shew civility to their partners. Such was Greville's *résumé*, after comparing the ball of Lady Wirksworth with the gracious, graceful fêtes of the Faubourg St. Germain.

Still more disagreeably was he impressed by the multitude of quizzical chaperons disfiguring the ball-room. Old ladies from sixty to eighty, and old gentlemen from sixty to a hundred, were seen nodding their heads and turbans in every direction. The dancers were girls and boys; the rest, mummies. Few or none of those fascinating creatures, who, retaining the freshness of youth in combination with the winning graces of matronhood, constitute the real attraction of a ball-room. After looking on for a quarter of

an hour, Greville turned away without the slightest interest in the scene. There was nothing to captivate the eye of the mere spectator. Already he had made up his mind not to enter another ball-room during his stay in London.

Two withered faces, beaming with gracious smiles, presented themselves at that moment before him,—the Marquis of Droneham and Lady Jane — profuse in their expressions of regret at not having been there to present him in form to the hostess. And now, departure was impossible; for no sooner was the inquiry set on foot by all present, concerning the good-looking stranger to whom Lord Droneham was paying such marked attentions, answered by Lady Wirksworth with the intelligence that it was Lord Greville of Greville Abbey, the greatest match of the day, than every one present was clamouring for an introduction. It was in vain the Lady Dronelys assured all the mammas of all the daughters that he was no partner for them, that he never danced; they insisted upon know-

ing him. In that single moment, he had become the *point de mire* or *fleur des pois* of the admiring ball-room. If he did not dance,—he deserved to dance,—he ought to dance,—it was his duty to dance. With such a figure and so elaborate a toilet, it was clear that the vocation of partner was marked out for the Earl of Greville.

Could the Countess have conjectured, twelve months before, when her apprehensions invested with such glowing colours the temptations likely to beset her son in a London soirée, the perfect sang froid with which Greville was fated to parry the attacks of the most enterprising chaperons, and the blind indifference with which he was likely to contemplate all that was fairest of the circles of fashion, she would perhaps have spared the soul of poor Anodyne an additional weight of mendacity, and herself and her travelling carriage the task of a journey to Naples!

CHAPTER VII.

Médisant comme une femme; et menteur, comme un homme d'esprit.—Baucker.

"Already!" was the involuntary exclamation of Lord Greville, when, the following morning, he saw his name figure for the first time in divers paragraphs of the morning papers. Though but a day in London, he had become the legitimate prey of the manufacturers of polite intelligence!

Under the name of "The Earl of Grenville, from Grenville Abbey, at the Clarendon Hotel," he was announced among the arrivals;—"Sir

Thomas Hardy entertained a select circle yesterday at dinner, at his house in Clarges street, including the Earl of Greenfield, &c. &c."—purported to inform the fashionable world where he had eaten his mutton;—while in the elaborate list of company present at the ball of the Marchioness of Wirksworth, he found himself, under the name of Granville, niched in once more, between those of the Earls of Rawdon and Timbuctoo! "*Et voilà comme on écrit l'histoire.*"

Three mornings afterwards, his name was not only correct, but classical. The Morning Post had him at its fingers' ends. The Earl of Greville was cited among the loungers in the park,—among the spectators at the opera,—among the fashionables at a gay supper party afterwards,—at Lady A's ball, at Lady B's concerts,—and wherever else when two or three hundred of the gay world were gathered together. For the purpose of exciting the interest of the gossips, a very new name is almost as good as a name thoroughly established; and the Earl of Greville

was consequently as invaluable, for a time, as the Duke of Wellington or Count d'Orsay. Even Greville himself was almost as much amused as the gossips, to find with what accuracy his whereabout was traced by the historiographers of the Strand.

First came an announcement that "The young Earl of Greville, who, on attaining his majority last year, and the enjoyment of a princely fortune, quitted England for a lengthened tour in the East, has lately returned to Europe with his valuable MSS. and collections, which are likely to be given to the public. His lordship is just arrived in London to take his seat in the house of peers." Then followed, in the course of a day or two, the inevitable contradiction:—"We were mistaken in supposing that the Earl of Greville had come into the possession of his splendid fortune. By the will of his father the late Earl, his lordship does not attain his majority till the completion of his twenty-fifth year." To this, a rival morning

paper, jealous of exclusive intelligence, immediately added, "The Earl of Greville, representative of one of the most ancient titles and finest fortunes in the kingdom, after spending the winter at Paris, has just made his début in fashionable life!" And if they did not yet seize upon him to be the turn of a paragraph headed "FASHIONABLE HYMENEALS," it was only because they economised the new title by way of making the most of it. It might be as well to allow his lordship a fortnight's flirtation, before they were so obliging as to furnish him with a wife.

Meanwhile he was become a lion;—a lion, not *un lion*,—a lion in the London sense of the word. Any one but Fred Massingberd would have perceived that, when they entered together the opera-box they had taken in common with Lord St. George, it was towards Greville rather than himself the *lorgnettes* of the curious in dandies were directed. It was no longer, "Who is that with Fred Massingberd?"—or, "Who has Fred picked up?"—as on their first appearance; but,

"Is not that Lord Greville with Fred?"—or more frequently, "Surely that handsome creature talking to Massingberd must be Lord Greville?" It was becoming essential for people of the world to know him; and even people out of the world — people belonging to the *wide* world — were beginning to point him out to each other from their carriages in the drive, or their boxes at the opera, with "Look, Sophy, look! that handsome young man is the Earl of Greville."—It is true the Sophys thus apostrophized usually fixed upon some dashing young gentleman in a cobalt blue coat, with mustachios as long as those of the Shah, to be the representative of the earldom. But still, even Baker street and Gloucester place possessed their ideal of the eastern traveller—the Parisian *élégant*, — announced by the six-penny trumpets of Fame that flourish quotidianly upon our breakfast-tables.

"I am sadly afraid, my dear young friend, that *our evidence* will not be called for till the *end* of *next week!*" whispered Lord Brookes,

drawing him into a dark corner of the staircase leading to the British Gallery, one rainy morning. "If I had entertained *the remotest suspicion* of this, God forbid that I should have *hurried you up from Oxfordshire,* in the *inconsiderate* manner I did,—*particularly* under the circumstances of my friend Lady Greville's *delicate* state of health! However, I had a letter (*this morning*) from Lady Brookes, who tells me she has been passing *two days* at the Abbey, (for the *mutual support of their spirits,* I suppose, poor souls—uh! uh! uh!) and that your mother is doing *excellently well!*—Anodyne is quite satisfied with her. All, therefore, I have to recommend,—*since your stay in town is inevitable,*—is, that you reconcile yourself to the delay *as well as you can.*—Ten days will *soon* be over,—and *then,* DEO VOLENTE, we can *return to Oxfordshire in peace!*"—

With this philosophical admonition, the Earl found it easy to comply. Any place was at that moment preferable to the subjection in which

he had been living at Greville Abbey,—any presence more agreeable than that of his mother; whose every word, and look, and gesture, purported investigation and surmise. He was in a state of mind when the society of indifferent persons is acceptable; a state of mind in which we are unwilling to give an account of our thoughts, or decide upon our intentions; a state of mind when we strive to dazzle our eyes with momentary sunshine, lest they should penetrate the clouds of the past, or mists of the future.

"*Au jour, le jour!*" was every day his rallying cry,—as it is that of most young men of his age, not altogether in charity with themselves or others. Nor were his associates of a character to inculcate a graver school of philosophy.

"Have you no message for me from our friends in the Rue St. Dominique?" he ventured to inquire of Achille de Cerny, when they met at Almack's.

"None!" replied the *petit roquet*, eagerly accepting his offered hand. "They were on the eve of their departure for Normandy when I came away. Every one, as you may imagine, was quitting Paris."

"Perhaps you did not see them after my departure?"

"Yes, indeed!—we had a charming party to Franconi's, a few days after Chantilly. But now I think of it, there were only the St. Pierres and La Roche Aymars;—Madame de Rostanges and her sister were not of the party."

"You did *not* see them, then?"

"On the contrary,—I went to the Rue St. Dominique, to ask their orders for England."

"And did Madame de Rostanges honour you with any commissions?"

"Yes, the Marquis begged me to bring him some sticking-plaister and some cow-cabbage seed. He is growing, you know, a determined agriculturist. *Il faut bien être quelque chose!*"

"You are sure he charged you with no message for me?" persisted Greville, anxiously.

"He certainly bad me tell you something,—I swear I forget what!"

"Can't you try to recollect?"

"St. Sévron was there, holding forth as usual; and we got into a dispute about some jockey question that drove everything else out of my head; (St. Sévron will marry Eugénie de Nangis, I suspect, before the summer is over,—they are neighbours, you know, in Normandy!) And now I remember, Rostanges bad me tell you you were a horrible correspondent; for that he had written to you twice without receiving an answer."

Lord Greville, not having received a line from the Marquis since his arrival in England, could not refrain from an expression of incredulity.

"I may be mistaken," cried Cerny, eager to extricate himself from the corner under the orchestra into which he was pinned by Greville;

"perhaps he said once,—though I think it was twice;—at all events, he said you were a bad correspondent."

The twang of Weippert's band roused Lord Greville disagreeably from the reverie into which he had fallen after this vague communication; and on raising his eyes, he saw that Cerny, or, as he was studiously designated in London, the Count de Cerny, was heading a wild company of galloppers, whose romping or racing produced in Greville's mind a disagreeable reminiscence of the *guinguettes* of Paris.

"How damned flat and *décousu* is all this!" cried Fred, who, now that Lord Greville had attained the height of fashionable distinction, clung to him for the support which he had begun with imparting. "Just look at Cerny! steaming and panting like a losing horse after receiving desperate punishment! What can tempt him to perpetrate such enormities as a

galop, anywhere except at Musard's; or even there, unless after a second bottle of champagne!"

"Cerny fancies himself committing an Anglicism, whenever he does anything particularly offensive," interposed Lord St. George, who now joined them; "and swallows the dose as glibly as a glass of *Parfait amour!*"

"By Jove! he is positively going to waltz!" cried Fred, with a look of well-feigned pity. "Has poor Achille been put upon a dancing regimen by his physician?"

"You were yourself a determined valseur last season," observed St. George. "Be more indulgent, my dear Fred, towards the sins of which you have repented!"

"I don't repent—I only regret that I waltzed to so little purpose; for it was merely because I was making up to your cousin, Lady Louisa Clare and her three thousand a year,—neither of whom would have anything to say to me.

Heavenly powers! how horribly these people waltz!—look!"

"What effort—what labour!" cried Greville. "How different from the easy elegance of Albert and Jules!"

"Admire poor Lord Edward—rolling like a ship in a storm!" rejoined St. George. "And the two Percevals—look at the two Percevals! Do you remember Shelley's Faust—

> The giant-snouted crags, ho! ho!
> How they snort and how they blow!"

"Hush, hush!" interposed Lord Greville, drawing them away from the upper bench, the fair occupants of which appeared to be lending an ear to their criticisms; "you will certainly be overheard."

"I wish we were likely to be understood!" cried Fred Massingberd, as ready in England to rail against the English as in Paris to find fault with the French. "I swear I blush for

my country when I witness such monstrous exhibitions."

"The eye is certainly more satisfied in a foreign than an English ball-room," observed Greville. "I fear we must plead guilty to some deficiency in matters of taste."

"Deficiency?"—retorted Fred. "The English have about as much taste as the New Zealanders!"—

"We did well enough, so long as we did not pretend to any," observed St. George; "but since we turned virtuosi and dilettanti, it has been the devil and all with us!—A few years ago,—

"'Some demon whispered, 'Albion have a taste,'"

and ever since, John Bull has been befooling himself in the eyes of the world like Tom Errand dressed in Beau Clincher's jubilee clothes!"

"Come, come!—you are really too bitter!"

cried Greville, laughing. "How can you find courage for severity, with such charming objects before you."

"Beautiful if you will, but I can scarcely say charming," replied St. George, following the eyes of Lord Greville towards the seats of the patronesses and the set formed immediately before them. "Their loveliness no one need dispute. But there is such want of soul, such want of sympathy, such want of everything that invites a man of sense to more than five minutes' conversation! A London woman is so *bornée!* A London woman has not a grain of interest in anything passing out of her own little circle."

"And pray what has the *Parisienne?*"—cried Fred. "In my opinion, Frenchwomen are the cursedest egotists under the sun!"

"At all events, a Frenchwoman talks about herself, her sensations, her affairs, so agreeably, that she makes us fancy them our own!" ob-

served Greville, unwilling to remind his friend how little he knew of the better order of those he was accusing.

"And then she *does* talk about her own," added Lord St. George, "and not about those of her neighbour. Here, the women are all gossips,—all scandal-mongers!"

"I agree with you," observed Greville, "that in Paris to be *mauvaise langue* is to be *mauvaise compagnie;* but I have yet to discover the deformity of the forked tongue in my countrywomen. I grant you that their tone of conversation is far from piquant. But it is at least devoid of pretension; and there is something peculiarly feminine in its very simplicity."

"Hear, hear, hear, hear, hear!"—cried Fred Massingberd, forcing a laugh.

"How long is it, my dear Greville, since you ratted?" cried Lord St. George.

"Ever since he became the little Benjamin of yonder august tribunal," rejoined Massingberd,

looking towards the patronesses' bench. "Grev is now *l'enfant gâté* of May Fair—would you have him ungrateful?"

"I would have him consistent, if it were only to bring such whirligigs as you and I to shame," said St. George, not a little amused by so sudden a recantation, and unable to retrace it to the vexation arising from Cerny's intelligence concerning Mademoiselle de Nangis.

"For my part," cried Fred, perceiving that Lord Greville, to avoid their quizzing, had moved out of hearing, "I wish him no worse punishment for his inconstancy than to marry one of these feminine simplicities, and settle with her for life at Greville Abbey."

"Since you reside within a mile or two of him, my dear Fred, such a wife might be a safer thing than a Lady Greville from the other side of the water," observed St. George, with a knowing smile.

"As far as *I* am concerned, long may he remain single!" cried the *roué*. "I would rather

have him take the hounds and do something to humanize the neighbourhood, than resign himself at once to snobhood, as the respectable father of a family. Would not one think that old Droneham had heard me, and was resolved to circumvent my evil counsels? — See what a dead set he is making at poor Grev!—As if either of those superannuated Juliets of his had the least chance of bringing down such a Romeo!"—

"Not now, certainly," replied St. George, while Lord Droneham, coolly hooking himself to the arm of Greville, walked him deliberately into the tea-room. "There are too many candidates on the list. Not a chaperon in the room but has an eye to Greville Abbey. Not a dowager in London but has booked Greville for her daughter. If he had remained at Naples all the winter, there is no saying into what his mother might not have bamboozled him. But the time is past. There is safety in numbers. Grev is no longer so shy or so mother-pecked, as to be at

the mercy of the first girl resolute enough to bully him out of his heart."

If there were grounds for Lord St. George's assertion, the chaperons in London received little encouragement from the Earl. Listless, preoccupied, indifferent, it was impossible for a man to lend himself more awkwardly to a flirtation. He did not dance,—he did not ride;—and in his own or Fred Massingberd's cab, was as inattackable as when looking down from his lofty height upon a ball-room, not even to be beguiled into the perilous pleasure of sitting out a quadrille. It might have been imagined that Lady Greville had expressly reared him in these anti-matrimonific habits, as a safeguard against maternal machinations.

By degrees, even the most resolute gave him up as a hopeless case.

"There is nothing to be done with Lord Greville;—take my word for it there is nothing to be done with him!" whispered the Mar-

chioness of Wirksworth to her nieces. "It is a waste of powder and shot, my dears, to lose your time in the attempt."

"*Our* time?"—repeated Lady Maria, affecting surprise. "My dear aunt, we are only civil to him on his mother's account;—we have the greatest regard for his mother. All the world knows that Lord Greville is not a marrying man."

"Why, as he is only two and twenty—"

"Old enough to have distinguished himself as a *roué!*" persisted Lady Maria. "At Paris, there was a certain Lady Cobham—but for his mother's sake we may as well let the story drop!"

The Marchioness thought otherwise, for to *her* the story was a new one; and when, in the course of the evening, "Monsieur le Comte Albert de Cerny" was presented in due form to her ladyship as to a giver of balls and patroness of partners, her first question regarded Greville

and the certain Lady Cobham, who had distinguished themselves by their flirtation at Paris.

"On the contrary, Lord Greville did us the honour of preferring a countrywoman of my own," was Cerny's reply. And forthwith, with significant smiles and gesticulations, he entered into the Rostanges' chapter, in a tone calculated to enkindle against him all the pruderies of dowagerhood.

"A sad hypocrite, I fear!" was her ladyship's observation when, a few days afterwards, the merits of the favourite of the hour were pointed out to her admiration by Lady Louisa Clare. "My nieces hinted to me that Lord Greville was not exactly what he appeared. With all his affectation of coldness and reserve, he has been already on the point of causing two divorces!"

"And with a face as demure as a saint in a niche!" cried Lady Louisa, laughing. "Nay, pardon me! I did not mean to offend you; only I don't see what right we all have to tear

the reputation of a charming young man to rags, because we can't make him propose to our daughters or nieces."

"If you intend an allusion to any member of *my* family," Lady Wirksworth was indignantly beginning—

"You cannot suppose it!" hastily interrupted Lady Louisa. "Greville is three years younger than the youngest of the Lady Dronelys:—*they* are of course out of the question. Nay! I wish *everybody* was out of the question!" cried she, affecting a more moral strain. "It is one of the disgraces of London society that a young man of fortune cannot shew his face among us, without requiring the protection of the police."

"Your ladyship speaks feelingly!" sneered Lady Wirksworth, aware that the jointure of Lady Louisa Clare had attracted the homage of half the fortune-hunters about town.

"Oh! a woman can take good care of herself!" replied Lady Louisa, gaily; "we are privileged to frown away the most enterprising

adventurer. But a man cannot play the savage. A handsome young Lord, with so sweet a smile and such rich brown hair as Greville's, must not be *too* brutal in his announcement that Miss-traps and spring guns are set against artful ladyships on his premises."

"Nevertheless, I fancy the artful ladyships do not find him very encouraging!" observed Lady Wirksworth, significantly. "The other day at the Greenwich party—"

"Ay! by the way — the other day at the Greenwich party, he was more than usually absent and uncivil!" cried Lady Louisa, detecting at once the Marchioness's allusions to her own unsuccessful efforts to enliven him. "Even to me, with whom he is more at his ease than with other women, both as the cousin of his friend Lord St. George, and one to whom his thousands a year are of less importance,— even to *me* he was as high—as high—as high as yourself, my dear Lady Wirksworth, when frowning out of your drawing-room some country cousin.—Shall I tell

you why?" she continued, rapidly, as if to in
cept the angry retort of the Marchio
"Because that chattering Frenchman, w
some one or other introduced into
party—"

"If you allude to the Count Achille de C
he was introduced by *me*," interposed
Wirksworth, with much majesty.

"Exactly!—because that chattering
Achille de Cerny, who was introduced by
ladyship, seized the occasion just before
to give him unwelcome intelligence of his f
in Paris."

"Intelligence of his friends in Paris
what nature?"—cried Lady Wirksworth
getting her resentment in her curiosity.

"I refer you to your friend the Count.
it was far from of an agreeable nature I
because Greville touched nothing at dinn
devilled white bait, drank only iced wate
called for his carriage before the dessert
the table."

"It must be owned he was no great acquisition to the party," said the Marchioness.

"He might have been, but for the officious Count, who was none at all!" retorted Lady Louisa. "From that evening, I have not met Lord Greville at a single ball. St. George told me this morning that he is prosed to death by some election committee, to which Lord Brooks pins him down as a public example. But I am convinced, poor fellow, he has something on his mind; and that while all the world is intent upon his committing matrimony, *he* is in much greater danger of committing felo de se."

"As you observed just now," said the Marchioness, turning maliciously upon the pretty little widow, "it were perhaps as well if we troubled ourselves less with what Lord Greville may be intent upon committing. However, we have but a few days longer to indulge our surmises. Parliament will be prorogued next week; and then all the false pretenders who affect to be detained in town for the good of

the nation, will be forced into the enjoyment of their country seats."

"Don't assume such a tone of menace," cried Lady Louisa Clare, rising to take leave. "*I* have no country seat!—I am going to Cowes.—You will perhaps become too envious of my happiness, when I tell you that I have given rendezvous there to my cousin St. George and his yacht, to your chattering Count, and to Lord Greville."

CHAPTER VIII.

'Tis one thing to be tempted, Escalus;
Another thing to fall.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE information alluded to by Lady Louisa Clare as having cast a damp on the spirits of Lord Greville at his Greenwich party, was a report communicated at the suggestion of Fred Massingberd,—that a day was actually fixed for the marriage of Eugénie de Nangis with the Comte de St. Sévron!

Greville had no motive for suspecting the accuracy of the intelligence.—Cerny was in close

correspondence with half a dozen *lions* of the jockey club, and supposed to be in clandestine correspondence with the Hotel de St. Pierre. What more likely than that among other gossip any one of them should have mentioned a circumstance so interesting to an intimate of the family of Rostanges?—

As he galloped his horse impatiently along the tortuous windings leading from the Crown and Sceptre towards the London-road, (much to the indignation of certain policemen and foot-passengers, particularly when they discerned by the light of the lamps that the harness was graced with a coronet,)—Greville reproached himself bitterly for the emotions excited by Cerny's information. What right had he to interest himself in Eugénie de Nangis's welfare? what right to object to her marriage with another?—St. Sévron was an estimable person,—a man of sense and honour,—a man to whom she might have attached herself in spite of the rejections which had marked her former insen-

sibility. The Comtesse de St. Sévron would doubtless be a very happy woman;—the Comtesse de St. Sévron, established in her sister's neighbourhood both in Normandy and the Faubourg, an invaluable addition to the happiness of Madame de Rostanges. He was forced to admit that nothing could be more eligible than the arrangement.

Still, in spite of himself, the name of the Comtesse de St. Sévron,—more especially of a Comtesse Eugénie de St. Sévron,—grated disagreeably on his ear. He gave a fresh cut to his horse every time the arrangement of syllables recurred to his imagination. The name of Eugénie took him back to Paris,—to the Faubourg,—to the Rue St. Dominique,—to Chantilly,—to the Château de Grangeneuve;—and strangely enough, as he pursued his hurried way along the Greenwich-road, instead of perceiving Dover coaches or Camberwell omnibuses,—the Elephant and Castle, or the gas-lights of St. George's Fields,—poor Greville seemed

to contemplate the Arch of Triumph and the Porte Maillot; and to feel under his horse's hoofs, in place of the smooth Macadamization of Kennington, the rugged pavé of the Champs Elysées. He was living in the past;—living in the days when in lieu of the insipid nonentityism of the Miss Hardys or the frivolous nothingness of the Lady Dronelys, his soul had been soothed by the gentle courtesies of Madame de Rostanges, or incited by the intelligent companionship of her sister.

Such was the state of Greville's feelings when, on arriving at the Hotel, instead of keeping his engagements for the evening, he shut himself up in his room with a strict prohibition against interruption. For the first time since his arrival in town, real emotions were stirring in his heart. The cold superficialities of London life had scarcely availed to impart sufficient interest even to the passing day; and any deeper sympathy with the heartless throng appeared impossible. But in those who had

welcomed him as a brother, and confided in him as a friend,—in those who had received him without ceremony and conceded nothing to his worldly distinctions,—he was conscious of an interest not to be weakened by time or absence,—an interest such as lends enchantment even to the weariest ways of human life.

Already, since his arrival in England, he had ventured to address a few hurried lines to Sophie,—a few lines without signature, but of a nature to leave her in no doubt as to their origin. Not, however, in renewal of his past offence.—On the contrary, his object was to express his sense of her gentle forbearance; and entreat that, for one idle hour of infatuation, he might not remain excluded from her friendship. He asked only to be forgiven; he promised in return the humblest gratitude, the most irreproachable self-command.

But this letter remained unanswered. Greville had taken precautions, through the assistance of Giacchimo, that it should be delivered

into the very hands of Madame de Rostang[illegible]. He knew that it had reached its destination, yet no reply was vouchsafed. He now resolved to address her a second time.

From Fred Massingberd he had gathered that the illness of his mother was understood to be a mere invention, to excuse his abrupt departure from Paris; and Greville now readily understood the contempt testified towards his hypocrisy by Eugénie and Madame de Rostanges.

He submitted patiently to the imputation, however, till the intelligence imparted by Cerny. Unknown to himself, Greville had learned to dwell upon the insinuations of the Princesse de Chaulieu, of Monsieur de Rostanges, and even of Sophie, concerning the preference entertained for him by Eugénie, till the affection of Mademoiselle de Nangis was becoming essential to him. It was something to feel that there existed on earth a being unconnected with himself by ties of kindred, to whom his happiness was a first object;—it was something more

know that this preference was entertained by one so lovely, so gifted as Eugénie. With the egotism of his sex, he allowed himself to appropriate an affection, in the possession of which he had never deigned to testify a moment's gratification!

The rumours circulated by Achille de Cerny roused him somewhat rudely from his infatuation; and he now addressed himself earnestly to Madame de Rostanges, no longer as a lover, but as a brother and a friend, imploring her to re-assure him concerning the prospects of her sister. Was her heart really interested in the alliance she was about to form, or was it a *mariage de raison?*—Was it as a sacrifice to the persuasions of her friends, or of her own free choice, that she had resolved to give her hand to the Count de St. Sévron?—

After despatching his letter, Greville flattered himself that the agitation of his feelings would subside. He had not prepared himself for the anxiety with which he should await the

reply. He had never, indeed, till this tr[redacted] fully appreciated the power of Eugénie o[redacted] his feelings. Slowly, but surely, her charm[redacted] her excellence, the nobleness of her characte[redacted] had obtained a paramount influence over hi[redacted] mind,—his heart,—his destinies. On the ev[redacted] of losing her for ever, he was fully conscious of her value. Greville found it impossible to mingle among the triflers of society. Amid his poignant anxiety of mind, he had no patience for the empty prolixities of Lord Brooks, or the turmoil of fashionable vanity; which interested him no more than if the pompous actors of the pageant were so many wooden puppets.

A letter bearing the Evreux postmark, and inscribed to his address in the same delicate hand-writing, *à pattes de mouche*, as the billet delivered to him by Eugénie in the salon of the Hotel de Rostanges, was at length placed in his hand.

For some moments, he was unable to open

it; and even when opened, the consciousness to what extent his happiness was involved in the contents, rendered it difficult to decypher a syllable. At length, overmastering his agitation, he achieved the perusal of the following lines:—

"I would willingly have written before. It was no unkind or resentful feeling that kept me silent. No, Greville! From the moment your generous exertions conquered our friendship, my affections have never wavered.—I pitied you when I saw you betrayed by a bad impulse into treachery foreign to your character.—But throughout every vileness to which that folly caused you to descend, I condemned you only as a sister might condemn a beloved and erring brother.—I could not prevail on myself to resent your offence as personal.—It seemed impossible you could wish to injure and disgrace so true a friend.—

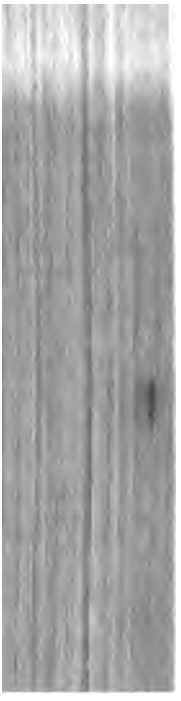
"But I had no right, under all the circumstances, to become your correspondent without

the knowledge of my husband. His happine[redacted] and honour are in my keeping. The disparity of age between us causes him to assign doubl[redacted] value to my attachment; and the disappointment were proportionably great, did he find me falter in my duty. Judge whether I have a right to deceive this kind and confiding friend!—Forgive me if I express myself so badly.—I am no great letter-writer,—I can only speak from my heart.

"But now, from the tone in which you renew your entreaties, I can no longer refuse to listen or reply;—for your questions regard the happiness of my dearest sister. You ask me whether there is a probability of Eugénie's marriage with our friend St. Sévron, and whether such an union would conduce to her welfare. No!—a thousand times no!—I once desired it. My peaceful existence taught me to appreciate the blessing of a lot of negative enjoyment. But since I knew you, Greville, my views have altered. Since I knew you, I have conceived

the possibility of a more elevated order of happiness, a nearer interchange of mind and affection, than is compatible with disparity of years. Not for myself: — my destinies are accomplished, and my heart resigned,—but for my sister. Eugénie is not as I am—indolent, calm, quiescent,—Eugénie is endowed with a loftier frame of character—a character more consonant with your own.—My sister is worthy of you, dear Lord Greville; she would assure your happiness, as you would confirm hers.

"This conviction it was that rendered me blind to the indiscretion of your frequent visits to our house.—I believed—believed from my inmost soul—that the attraction which brought you among us was my sister.—Conceive my mortification, my wonder, when that mad declaration burst from your lips, which I banish, henceforward, from my recollection!—You deceived yourself, Greville. In your secret soul, then, as now, Eugénie was your first object. You loved



of your days.—

"Reflect upon this.—You are fr
independent.—Your social positio
with that of my sister. I should n
suggest it to you,—for they tell m
the custom of your country;—but r
have broken the ice by the avowal
interest in the happiness of Eugén
to ask why not pursue in your
the inquiries you have urged so
touching St. Sévron?—

"She knows not of my writing to
would she pardon my betrayal of he
or the candour with which I have
remove the veil from your eyes.—
therefore, without reserve or hesi

but claims in the meantime the title of your true and attached friend,

"S. DE R."

The perusal of this letter excited the feelings of Greville to a degree for which, notwithstanding the agitation of the preceding days, he had not prepared himself. A thrill ran through his veins at the mere sight of the handwriting, connected with so many wild emotions. For weeks past his recollections of Madame de Rostanges had been embittered by feelings of shame; and while still uncertain concerning the destinies of her sister, it was to Eugénie alone he dedicated the happier impulses of his heart.

But now, in spite of himself, in spite of his better reason, in spite of every sage resolution, the letter of Madame de Rostanges, however calculated to repress every sentiment connected with herself, served for a moment to renew his earlier impressions. As he read, he seemed to hear the melodious voice of Sophie

again addressing him. The tones of the more impressionable Eugénie were often stern,—often abrupt,—varying with the strong impulses of powerful feeling. But Sophie's "voice was ever soft and low,—an excellent thing in woman." And now, it seemed to breathe once more in his ears sentiments at once so noble and so feminine, that he could have fallen at her feet with the same impassioned reverence inspiring his former adoration.

Such is the weakness of human nature!—At Greville's age, there exists little of the consistency of character with which the imagination endows its heroes. And though reluctantly convinced that he had never for a moment obtained an influence over the feelings of Madame de Rostanges, save as an object of affection to her sister, yet her hand-writing, the letter emanating from herself, and emitting the same peculiar fragrance as the note addressed to him in the Rue St. Dominique and long afterwards dearly treasured, called up a

train of fatal associations. He saw before him the angelic smile, the graceful gesture, which, day after day, used to welcome his coming; and which he then little attributed to the instigations of sisterly attachment.

To this unpardonable weakness, succeeded impressions still less excusable. No man becomes entangled in the corruptions of society without deterioration. *On commence par être dupe,—on finit par être fripon.* The clubs, with their coarse jests,—the coteries, with their false sentiments,—suffice to crush the noblest nature in the world; and though on the character of Greville they had wrought perhaps less than their usual measure of contamination, he was no longer the same confiding, ingenuous, warm-hearted being who had offered his hand to Fred Massingberd in the Maltese quarantine, and thrown himself headlong into the flames at the Château de Grangeneuve.

From the young men of the day with whom he associated, he heard nothing concerning

women, but heinous accusations. The voice of his *roué* companions,—and however despicable, it is a voice that by dint of noise and iteration makes itself heard,—was never weary of taxing them with vice and meanness,—accusing the married of dissoluteness, and the single of cunning. To listen to the assertions of such men as St. George and Fred, all the daughters were occupied with the delicate task of "catching" young men of family and fortune; all the mothers occupied with furthering their projects.

The very evening before, Fred Massingberd, whose conversation seemed flat, even to himself, unless when rendered piquant by impertinence, had attacked him with allusions to his French "*liaison.*"

"You flattered yourself, Grev, my boy," said he, "that you were courted in the Faubourg *pour l'amour de vos beaux yeux!*—Not a bit!—They wanted you for that sister of Madame de Rostanges.—You were all but victimized.—The whole set were in confederacy. The husband

winked at what was going on; while the wife, who, though stupid enough, had *nous* enough to see that forty thousand a year was not to be sneezed at, made a pet of you solely with the malice aforethought of making you her brother-in-law."

"She never *did* make a pet of me!" replied Greville, in a husky voice.

"My dear fellow, do you suppose nobody has eyes and ears but yourself?—What other Englishman has ever been torn to pieces in the Faubourg as you were?—What other Englishman was ever established *au coin du feu* among them,—or invited *en famille* to their barns of chateaux?—What do you suppose was the cause, except your *million de rentes?*—You are a damned good-looking fellow;—so is St. George, who never so much as obtained a formal dinner among them. You are agreeable enough when you choose;—so I flatter myself am I;—yet when would old Rostanges have thought of asking me to his old barracks in Normandy?—

Les Etangs, indeed!—he wanted a gudgeon more in his *étangs;—et voilà!*"

Greville was hurt and angry,—far more hurt and angry than he saw fit to shew; yet involuntarily he assigned some credit to insinuation of which he would have died rather than admit the justice. It is one of the miserable consequences of living among the frivolous and worthless, that insensibly we adopt their worthless and frivolous judgment of the conduct of others; and worse still,—far worse,—that we even begin to question the motives of our own. The spirit of contemptuous analysis recoils upon ourselves, till we become victims of our own irony. No longer reliant upon professions of friendship or demonstrations of affection,—we doubt and misdoubt, till nothing appears real or secure. We are ever seeking the worm in the bud; or suspecting insidious ingredients in the lees of the cup of joy. The very relique once consecrated to our adoration in a secret shrine, is at length cast forth and trampled on as a

human bone!—Oh! what has the world to render in exchange for this lesson of blasphemy,—this utter desecration of the religion of the heart!—

On the morrow after Massingberd's bitter comments, arrived the letter of Madame de Rostanges;—a letter all truth,—all candour,—all generosity. Yet Greville could not forbear a momentary misgiving that he was a dupe!—Heretofore indifferent to the worldly advantages of which it was impossible to be ignorant, he had lately heard so much of projects to entrap him, that he was growing ungenerously mistrustful.

By degrees, however, he began to blush for his own meanness. A gradually awakening train of reminiscences brought before him, not only the mild womanliness of the gentle writer, but the generous warmth of Eugénie—of the impetuous, the almost disdainful Eugénie; who had never shewn him a token of deference,—never conceded an opinion to his;—who had

often reproved his weaknesses, ever disdained his attentions;—and who, if more tolerant of his society than that of the Comte de St. Sévron or the Marquis de la Roche Aymar, openly attributed her indulgence to his claims upon her gratitude as a benefactor,—as a foreigner upon her hospitality.

Sophie was doubtless mistaken in ascribing to her sister so decided a preference in his favour!—Madame de Rostanges was a partial observer. He had not been in company with Mademoiselle de Nangis since the Princesse de Chaulieu first pointed out her attachment; for it was on the very night of his foolish self-exposure, and on the morrow he had taken leave of her at the Hotel de Rostanges.

"A single day, nay, a single hour, spent in her society, would decide the question!"—mused Greville.

But how were his doubts to be cleared up?—To hazard the offer of his heart and hand while the slightest suspicion remained on his mind,

was an act of madness; and he had pledged himself to Lady Greville neither to quit England nor entangle himself in a matrimonial engagement, without her knowledge.

His first measure, consequently, must be to confide his project to his mother, and obtain her sanction to his return to Paris. It was due to her to refer himself to her opinion. It was due to himself to assert his independence, should she attempt an arbitrary exercise of authority without just cause for opposition.

"Certainly, my dear young friend,—certainly," cried Lord Brooks, on receiving his application for release. "Believe me, I felt duly conscious of the *vastness of the sacrifice* I was imposing upon you, in requiring your attendance in town—*at this advanced period of the season!*—I fully enter into the *misery* of being inveigled into Richmond parties and dinners at Blackwall!—Nothing, in fact, but *a sense of duty to my country* and to the *important trust* I have undertaken in your behalf, ever induced

me to *exact* the favour of your appearance before the committee. *All, however, is now at an end!* —*I scarcely know,* indeed, what we have been doing here for the last six days; for though I *made it a point* to accept the Marquis's *invitation* —*to an official dinner* on Monday next, there is no occasion that MY *unlooked-for delay* should prove any tie upon your time!"—

So thoroughly was Greville of his lordship's opinion that, ten hours afterwards, his travelling carriage entered the court-yard of Greville Abbey.

CHAPTER IX.

Il y a de la cruauté à faire péser l'autorité sur celui qui ne peut se défendre.

CAMILLE BODIN.

IT were an edifying study for the curious in human weakness, to compute the number of empty phrases uttered in the course of the year, for the purpose of disguising pre-occupation of mind. Excusable enough, perhaps, in the chance dialogues which unite the boring and the bored in the hateful compression of polite conversation, such hypocrisy is unpardonable between those conjoined by the sacred ties of kindred;—holding communion wherein, as in

prayer to Heaven, all hearts should be open —*all* desires known.

Throughout the tête-à-tête dinner that followed Greville's arrival at the Abbey, and the long evening following the tête-à-tête dinner, did the Countess persist in discussing the Squeamington Committee; in all its leaden details of question and answer between the dealers in professional fibbery, and the amateurs of the same branch of the fine arts. Lady Greville cared nothing about politics; perhaps because engrossed by her family interests, perhaps because "*contente d'ignorer bien des choses pour mieux entendre le reste!*"— She had studied them neither in their wide reference to the interests of the country, nor in their petty re-action in the organization of parties. Neither the borough of Squeamington, nor the assemblage convoked to analyse in the parliamentary crucible the exact extent of its corruption, were more to her than the pyramid of apricots in the dish before her; yet, throughout dessert, she managed to question and cross-question her son

concerning both; while Greville contrived to answer with as much plausible amplification, as if old Brooks were at his elbow, prompting the emptiness of his replies.

For some time past, Lady Greville had never been alone with her son without dreading some communication fatal to her projects for his establishment in life. Though she corresponded minutely with the Dronelys, hoping to learn from their gossip the detail of Hugo's London engagements, Lady Jane and Lady Maria could do no more than allude, on the Marchioness of Wirksworth's information, to his flirtation with a pretty widow, the cousin of his friend Lord St. George; and acquaint her that after spending a fortnight in the full tide of the vortex of London, seen everywhere and seen cheerful and gay, he had suddenly retired from the world and been heard of no more.

This mysterious retreat it was that took Lady Greville so pertinaciously to Squeamington, or rather to the committee room in which its crimes

and misdemeanours were canvassed. She would have questioned him as coolly about Almack's or Lovegrove's, as she did about Lord Brooks's long-winded explanations, but for the inexplicable fall of the curtain in the middle of the piece!—His mysterious disappearance boded no good to her schemes!

Lord Greville on the other hand was false by the force of contagion. Satisfied that his mother was uninterested in all she was saying and hearing, and unable to guess the motive of her want of confidence, he began to form a thousand groundless suspicions which prevented his entering frankly into the subject nearest his heart. Yet who that saw the mother and her only son engaged together in such apparently earnest conversation, would have dared suppose that each was practising upon the credulity of the other!—

Luckily, the matter was not so urgent as to require immediate explanation. Greville determined to sleep upon it. So complete, though

so unavowed even to himself, was his subjection to his mother, that he dreaded to submit himself to her dispassionate scrutiny. Regarding the Countess as a mirror of prudence and heavenly serenity, he had not courage to portray himself as the sport of even a blameless passion. Never had he heard her voice raised in displeasure,—never had he seen her temper ruffled,—never her countenance disturbed. The nearest approach to anger into which he had ever found her betrayed, was in a peevish speech or two, at Paris and immediately after his return from France; which, having no means of tracing to the foolish misapprehension concerning Lady Cobham, he attributed to vexation at being "sprighted with a fool,—sprighted and angered worse," in the tiresome person of Sir James. Even then, however, her temper had scarcely done more than reach the point of "variable."

At length, as the evening wore away and bed-candles were brought in, Lady Greville ventured

a bantering remark or two on the subject of London and its attractions.

"I am not surprised," said she, "to find you return without a wife from the great mart of matrimony, because you pledged yourself to me, dearest Hugo, that I should not be dowagered without warning. But I suspect you had a hard fight for your liberty?—I am told that little rattling cousin of Lord St. George's, whom nobody could bear at Naples, and whose journey to Vesuvius was called by Monsieur de Rohan, *une visite de volcan à volcan*—"

"You cannot mean Lady Louisa Clare, my dear mother?" interrupted Greville. "She is a woman of the sweetest disposition in the world."

"I was going to observe, that I heard she was the belle of the season this year; and need no other confirmation of the report than your eagerness in her behalf. Women are estimated by a man according to their value in the eyes of other men, rather than according to his own fancy. I perceive that Lady Louisa

is quite as popular as Lady Maria Dronely assured me."

"Lady Maria?—that withered piece of ill-nature!" cried Greville. "*She* then it was who represented me as a sheep leaping through the hedge after the rest of the flock,—eh?"

"No! she mentioned Lady Louisa Clare; it was I who suggested the motive of your homage."

"The motive of my homage,"—replied the Earl, unconcernedly.—"But why go on misleading each other thus!" cried he, suddenly ashamed of their mutual hypocrisy. "I have no wish to deceive you, mother; I am sure you do not wish to deceive *me*. Wherefore take precautions to acquaint you with what I am persuaded you know already?"

Lady Greville uttered not a syllable by way of encouragement or interruption. A nervous tremulousness of the lip alone denoted that she listened with interest.

"Between *us*, mother, there never should

have been a moment's concealment," cried Lord Greville. "I blame myself that there has been so;—for with me, you have been so kind,—so free,—so open—"

A restless gesture betrayed the impatience of his auditress.

"—that a hundred times I have been on the point of opening my heart to you," continued Greville. "But I own, though ashamed to avow myself so susceptible,—I own I was embarrassed by your calmness, your dispassionate tranquillity. It seemed to *me* a sort of profanation to approach you with idle tales of attachment which—"

"Come to the point, Hugo!"—said Lady Greville, in a low concentrated voice.

"There is at present no point to arrive at, dearest mother. I was only about to say," continued, again unconsciously taking refuge in words,—"that though you accuse me of having unjustifiably prolonged my absence, I should have delayed my return still longer,

but for the promise I made before quitting the Abbey, not to leave England without your previous sanction."

"Not to leave England?"—involuntarily repeated the Countess.

"Nay, do not look so alarmed! My absence would have been of no great duration. The Antelope would not have been in requisition. I was not going to the Archipelago again, nor to Egypt."

"Why tell me where you were *not* going?" cried Lady Greville, impatiently. "Why not say at once that you would return to Paris?"—

"I was *not* desirous of returning to Paris."

The Countess crossed her hands and sat resigned. There was no other leading question by which she could hope to extort his confidence.

"I wished—and I am now come to ask your sanction to my wishes,—to visit Normandy."

Lady Greville remained silent.

"To visit the family of the Marquis de Rostanges," continued he, seeing that she was determined on a full explanation.

Still Lady Greville answered not a word.

"You may remember them in Paris, mother? cousins to the Duchesse de St. Pierre, at whose house you enjoyed the only ball to which I ever knew you go, since I was a child."

"I remember the ball;—I scarcely remember the persons to whom you allude," observed the Countess, with the short abrupt accent of a person labouring with the repression of strong emotion; "a proof either of their insignificance or my own want of observation."

"I remember your being struck with the elegance and grace of their manners."

"Possibly. Nothing makes less impression upon me than grace of manner, because nothing is more deceptive."

"I thought, however, you might recollect them," added Greville, almost bitterly, "because I presented them to you as my friends."

"Still no great distinction!—You presented young Massingberd to me as your friend."

"In that I was wrong," replied Greville. "He had an anterior claim. I should have presented him to you as the son of an old friend of my father."

"It would not have prevented my discovering, my dear Hugo, that, like most other young men, your judgment was little to be relied upon in the choice of your associates; — that your preferences are actuated rather by the whim of the moment, than regard or esteem."—

"I have had little occasion to correct my judgment in such matters," observed Greville, nettled. "The strict seclusion in which I was brought up —"

He was stopped by a short, dry cough, indicating the displeasure of the Countess. "I am wrong, mother, to risk offending you," said he, checking himself, "particularly at this moment, when I stand in need of all your indulgence. I ask it for myself; but I ask it also

for those who are dear to me. Do not, I intreat, judge harshly, or speak harshly, of Madame de Rostanges."

Still uncertain to which portion of the rumours communicated to her by Mrs. Massingberd to assign credit, the Countess would have been satisfied, had Hugo recommended Mademoiselle de Nangis to her forbearance, that the married sister was the object of his attachment. The earnest manner in which he pronounced the name of the Marchioness, convinced her it was Eugénie she had to fear. It was with difficulty she repressed a movement of irritation.

"Still deceiving me!"—cried she, at last. "Why not speak frankly?—Why not tell me in plain terms that you are in love with this French girl, and that the object of your visit to Normandy is to demand her hand?"—

"If I see you thus agitated by a mere supposition," Greville was beginning—

"It is no supposition," exclaimed the Coun-

tess, in the same abrupt manner. "Your friend Mr. Massingberd — your friend Fred, the son, if you like it better, of an old friend of your father, — sent the news into Oxfordshire six weeks ago. Your mother only remained ignorant of the fact of your attachment, till apprised of it, as a bitter pleasantry, by the old woman at Hill Hall.

"You knew it,—you were aware of it?"

"What other motive urged me to recal you so hastily from Paris?"

"Your illness a feint?" murmured the Earl, in a tone of regret, recalling to the Countess in a moment the indiscretion into which she had been betrayed. "Yet all the time I was with you here, previous to my departure for London, not a syllable on the subject, — not a word of advice,—not a word of remonstrance!"

"I was unwilling to force myself into your confidence," observed Lady Greville, proudly. "The secret confided to Lord St. George and Mr. Massingberd would not, I conceived, be long

withheld from your mother.—The time is come. —I still await with patience the honour of your communication."

"Never,—while you treat me so unjustly and so unkindly!"—cried Greville, roused into some assumption of spirit. "I had no secret to confide on my return from Paris.—I had no desire, at that time, except to forget that I had ever set foot in France.—I swear to you, mother, that my first impulse on forming any serious project connected with the Rostanges' family was, to come and seek your advice,—to come and implore your sanction!—You smile—"

"If you come to ask my sanction, Hugh, surely my advice were now somewhat too late?"—

"No,—on my soul, no!—Mother, you have no right to discredit my word. *I* have never deceived you. *I* have never devised pretexts to—"

Lady Greville started from her chair; but quickly sat down again, overmastering her anger.

"Well, well, I will not recur, even in self-

defence, to a painful subject! At all events, trust me. At all events, believe me when I assure you that, so far from its being too late to refer myself to your counsel, my only object in visiting the Chateau des Etangs is to exercise my observation on the conduct and character of Eugénie de Nangis, ere I ask your consent to offer her my hand."

Lady Greville contemptuously shrugged her shoulders.

"You conceive that, if I do not deceive you, I deceive myself?"—cried Lord Greville. "Again no!—Were I not perfectly sincere, what prevents my making those proposals by letter which I am inclined to temper with greater caution?—It was because mistrustful of my own sentiments that I return to France."

"And it is because mistrustful of them that *I* require you to remain in England!" cried Lady Greville, with some vehemence. "I see in you a predestined dupe;—and—"

"That name must every way be inapplicable," cried Greville, the colour flushing to his temples. "Mademoiselle de Nangis is young, beautiful, irreproachable,—my equal in birth,—and if not my equal in fortune,—what do I want with money?"

"Nothing, except as an evidence that you are not the object of a scheme—a plot."—

"In that case," again interrupted Greville, "I am more fortunate in the instance in question than I should have been with most English girls of my own rank in life, since her fortune amounts to more than my annual income. Will that convince you of her disinterestedness,"—he continued, addressing his mother with an ironical smile.

"So little, that I forbid you to return to France, or renew your most unfortunate connexion with this family!" cried the Countess, gasping for breath. "Let it suffice as the motive of my aversion that they have caused

the first angry words ever exchanged betwixt me and my son!"—

"It does *not* suffice!"—replied Lord Greville, no longer to be silenced by specious pretexts;—his mother's avowal of having beguiled him from Paris on false pretences, sinking deep into his heart. "That motive has existed only during the last ten minutes, and your objections appear to have been conceived many weeks ago, on occasion of some groundless rumour. If you are willing to explain them to me, I am prepared to listen with candour;—but if not—"

"I am not prepared to explain more," cried Lady Greville, losing all self-command, "than that I refuse my consent to your marriage,—my consent to your proposal,—my consent to your departure from this country."

"Mother, mother!—It is thus that children are dealt with," cried Lord Greville, rising from his chair. "You are not reasonable,—you are not yourself!"—

"So much myself that my legal authority shall be exercised to the utmost to prevent your accomplishing an act fatal to your future happiness!"—

"Mother, listen to me!"—said Lord Greville, mildly approaching her.

"No, Hugo!"—cried the Countess, repelling his advances, and preparing to hasten from the room; "nothing you could say to me on this subject would in the slightest degree influence my decision. All further discussion will tend to promote disunion between us. Be wise!—Do not persist in a pursuit that can end only in ruin and wretchedness.—Good night.—When we meet to-morrow, my dearest son, be all that has passed between us forgotten."

Not even the conciliation of these parting words, however, availed to subdue the displeasure of Greville. No sooner had the Countess quitted him, than his repressed irritation burst forth. As with eager steps he paced the room, the mortifying dependence of his position stood

portrayed before him, as if viewed for the first time. Submitted in the pride of manhood to the authority of a woman,—the caprice of a woman,—for when is the authority of a woman other than caprice?—by what offence had he, a blameless child, so incurred the displeasure of his father as to be subjected to such chastisement?—What had he done to be denied the birthright of the poorest peasant on his estates?—Was it to be borne that, at an age when other men have controlled the destinies of nations, he alone should submit to such humiliating subservience?—

Then came the vexatious consciousness that his own supineness had been in a great measure the means of riveting his chain. So passive had been his obedience, that he had never been at the trouble of examining the exact extent of the Countess's rights and privileges. Surrounded by her creatures, seeing only men of the law to whom she *gave* the law, he had

accepted implicitly their exposition of the Countess's power over his person and fortune;—while the ardour of his filial affection prevented him from encouraging the hints of others, that he might find means of self-enfranchisement.

But now, the time was come when this pitiful subjection must be shaken off. The time was come when he must assert his own rights as a man, to think, feel, act,—if not to sign leases or execute deeds.—Two years of his legal minority were yet unexpired, — two years involving the happiness of his future life, if still to be subjected to the arbitrary control of one to whom the exercise of her own wayward authority was apparently more dear than the peace and honour of her son!—

At length, after an hour of bitter excitement, came the re-action of feeling common to all generous natures. He had said too much against his mother. He had taxed her too severely with selfishness, pride, tyranny; for after all, to

what tended her absolutism, but to secure what she believed to be his welfare? What had she ever done with a view to her selfish enjoyment? Wherein had she ever shewn a personal ambition? Had she not shunned, in earlier life, every temptation of vanity or weakness, — the pleasures of the gay world, the pomps of the great?—Had not her whole life been devoted to him?—Was he not her first object,—her sole object?—How pardonable therefore that, in the excess of her tenderness, she should somewhat overpass the boundaries of reason, to prolong the period yielding to her exclusive control the object of her exclusive attachment!—

Such was his final view of the case ere he retired to rest. Local influence once more preponderated. He was at the Abbey again; the Abbey, where his mother was a queen and himself a slave.—He could not fling off that overmastering influence.—

"I will talk to her in the morning," said he, as he ascended the gorgeously painted staircase,

and traversed the stately corridor leading to his bed-room. "I shall perhaps be less irritable, and my mother more amenable to reason. I was wrong to rush upon the subject so abruptly. I should have prepared her mind for my proposition."

So little did he perceive that his secret had been wrung from him by the master spirit in whose hands he was still as plastic clay, taking the form and impress predestined by her will!—

CHAPTER X.

Qui eut pu supposer dans une femme froide et nonchalante en apparence, une résolution si sèche et si cruelle?—

SAND.

LET it afford encouragement to domestic despots in the husbanding their resources, to know that Greville, who for twenty years had been held in submission by steady mildness, found a new source of subjection in the outbreak of violence into which his mother at length allowed herself to be betrayed!—

Loving her as he did, revering as he had ever done her more than feminine gentleness, he lite-

really dreaded to provoke anew the unaccountable excitement of which his avowals had been the origin. He could not bear to see that serene countenance flushed with anger, humiliation to hear that gentle voice raised in altercation. In such a guise, she was no longer the same mother to whom from infancy he had dedicated every affection of his heart.

Greville dreaded the breakfast tête-à-tête awaiting him. Contrary to his custom, in an establishment where everything was custom, he strolled out into the flower gardens and visited the conservatories at the very moment of the ringing of the breakfast-bell; perhaps with the idea of appearing more at his ease when encountering Lady Greville hurriedly on the threshold, than by awaiting her at table. If such his object, he might have spared his pains. Her ladyship was far too able a general to leave occasion for such manœuvres on the part of her son. She had taken care that Mr. Dowdeswell should be present; and when Greville, blushing and

apologizing, entered the dining-room, received him with even more than her usual courtesy and tenderness: immediately resuming with her agent the discussion of atmospheric railways, and a project for a branch one on ordinary principles, which Dowdeswell was eager to establish on the Greville Abbey estate.

The Earl laboured hard to appear interested in a question nearly regarding his property,—nay even to *feel* interested; and Dowdeswell was startled to find that the young man whom circumstances placed before him in the light of a puppet, was in reality intelligent and replete with information. Greville exerted himself to be companionable. The society of men older than himself, into which he had been recently forced by Lord Brooks, had so far quickened his apprehensions as to relieve him from the fear of appearing too wise or too learned when talking like a reasonable being, which he had contracted among such companions as Fred and St. George; and he was fully prepared to con-

verse with Dowdeswell on the subject of railroad statistics in general, English and continental.—

The agent was delighted. He had anticipated only a well-bred, good-natured fellow in the young lord with whom he had scarcely exchanged fifty words since they took a day's fishing together, some five years before. And to find him well informed—to find him actually what the agent considered a man of sense, —that is, a man having figures in his brain and at his fingers' ends,—was a thing which he had never expected as the result of an Eton, Oxford, and Paris education.

It was in vain, however, that he glanced towards the Countess for sympathy in his approbation, at the close of her son's lively picture of the vaguely gigantic projects of Thiers for the railwayization of France. Lady Greville sat with iron brow and compressed lips; evincing no tokens of interest in a subject wherein she saw clearly that the prejudices of her son had been embarked by his Carlist

friends. Unconsciously, her eyes were fixed upon a gardenia which Greville almost as unconsciously had placed in his buttonhole, while traversing the conservatories. She remembered having seen him uniformly wear a similar flower in Paris. With her unlucky habit of seeking motives in trifles, she then attributed the whim to association with some preference of Lady Cobham. She now connected it with persons far more repellent to her feelings.

Already, she began to dread the departure of the agent; nothing doubting that her son was only waiting his absence as a signal for the renewal of their conversation of the preceding night; and great indeed was her relief when, on Dowdeswell's announcement that pressing business required him to ride into Squeamington, Lord Greville instantly proposed bearing him company.

"There are one or two questions," said he, "connected with the borough, on which I should not be sorry to consult you; for I own I felt

ashamed when referred to on the subject by Lord Brooke, of my utter ignorance of all that regards my borough interests and corporation questions in general."

This remark might have been strictly included in the category of those recently described, as purporting only to disguise the mental pre-occupation of the speaker. Yet the Countess's eye grew stern as she listened; for she heard in it indications of an intended assumption of power on the part of the Earl. Convinced that he cared as little as herself about county politics or borough property, his object was probably to express by collateral hints, his intention to act and think in future for himself. She consequently saw him depart with Dowdeswell for his ride, if not with a heavy heart, at least with a lowering countenance.

The only one of the three perfectly satisfied with the arrangement, was the agent; who, with all due reverence towards the regent his noble patroness, was not sorry to find himself,

now that the term of her vicarious sovereignty was drawing to a close, promoted to the good graces of her successor.

Dowdeswell was a conscientious, active, able, practical man; who for twenty years had so completely devoted himself to the management of the Greville estates, that he took an interest in them beyond the mere earning of his salary, beyond the mere fulfilment of his duty, — nay, almost beyond the interest experienced by the noble owners themselves. The Earl was in fact almost a stranger, or rather almost a visitor, on the estate. There had been no motive to trouble him with details usually tedious to young men of his caste; and Dowdeswell often congratulated himself that instead of having to render his accounts and submit his plans to a spendthrift heir, defining timber as "an excrescence devised by nature for the payment of debts," he was able to consult with a wise and prudent matron, intent

upon the permanent advantage of the property. It was consequently no small relief to him to find the young Earl not only uncorrupted by Parisian frivolity or London insolence, but a well-bred young man, and intelligent withal. Poor Dowdeswell who, amid all his veneration for the mental powers of the Countess, had silently detected the deficiency of concentration inherent in every female mind,—the *vis inertiæ* adverted to in our quotation from Champfort,—a deficiency sufficing, without the aid of physical inferiority, to place the sex in a secondary place in the great scale of creation, was almost ashamed of the satisfaction it afforded him to discover that he should shortly become accountable to one more fully qualified for the appreciation of his exertions.

After quitting Squeamington, they returned leisurely towards the Abbey; when, at the close of a long morning spent in accompanying the Scotch forester through the plantations, and following the line suggested by their engineer for

the branch railroad, the Earl suddenly suggested a visit to the old squire at Hill Hall.

"Lady Greville said something, I thought, about returning to luncheon?"—observed Dowdeswell, with an air of consternation.

"We have past my mother's luncheon hour," replied Greville, looking at his watch. "By this time, she is out in her phaeton. I may, therefore, as well seize the opportunity of paying my respects to Mr. Massingberd."

Released from responsibility towards the Abbey, Dowdeswell was delighted. He muttered something about having to consult the old gentleman about a new drill of his invention, as a pretext for not proposing to the Earl to proceed to Hill Hall alone; for having occasionally seen his family smart under the hauteur of the squire's lady, he was not sorry to find himself announced as a morning visitor, in company with his patron the Earl of Greville.

The squire was "not at home." What

squire ever *is* at home at four o'clock on *a fine* August afternoon?—Dowdeswell suggested, however, that they should follow him to his farm; a pretty accurate knowledge of the localities of which carried him straight to the spot where stood old Massingberd, with his hands in the pockets of his fustian coat, contemplating, over the gate of a meadow, a fine colt of his own breeding, concerning which he was taking those orders from his old coachman, which he fancied himself to be dictating. His visitors were beside him ere he was aware of their coming; and the cordial shake of the hand with which he received Dowdeswell, did not relax when the agent modestly pointed out by whom he was accompanied.

"Glad to see you, my dear Lord,—heartily glad to see you.—What news do you bring me of my son?"—cried Massingberd, too kind-hearted to visit on the son of an old friend the want of neighbourly courtesy which he was well able to trace to the interference of his mother—

"I did not see Fred for nearly a week before I quitted London," answered the Earl. "I left town, indeed, in some haste, or I should have asked his commissions for Hill Hall."

"How little we old folks understand what is going on among the young ones!"—cried the squire. "I fancied you and Fred were always together,—frequenting the same clubs and the same company."—

"We *do* frequent the same clubs and the same company," replied Greville with a smile. "But I have latterly been engrossed with what my friend is not exactly disposed to find an agreeable occupation,—business, parliamentary business."

"I understood you were wanted in town about that rascally Squeamington committee," replied the squire, much to the horror of the decorous Mr. Dowdeswell; "but I didn't suppose it would occupy much of your time.—Brooks is the last man on earth to let an item of that kind of much-ado-about-nothing, out of his hands. He would grudge you the smallest bit of trouble,

the least possible inconvenience, that he could saddle on his own shoulders for the good of the nation. In my opinion, a specific office ought to be created by a grateful government for so devoted a patriot as my friend Brooks,—commissioner of sewers of the most high court of Boroughmongery.—Ha! ha! ha!—Dovedswell, I see you have fixed the eye of a connoisseur on my brown colt.—You remember his sire, old Patroclus?—Ay, but I suspect young Patroclus will beat the old 'un out of the field!—I intend him for Fred, my Lord,—what say you?—A fine figure for a cab in Hyde Park, eh?—what a chest!—what haunches!"—

Lord Greville, shrewdly suspecting that Fred Massingberd's principles in the great science of the road differed widely from those of his worthy parent in the fustian coat, was careful not to insult the memory of old Patroclus, or underrate the promise of Patroclus junior; but, as he turned to accompany the squire through the meadows back to Hill Hall, satisfied the old

gentleman with praising the excellence of Fred's horsemanship, and his standing among sporting men.

"Why, yes,—Cobham assures me they have scarce a better seat in Leicestershire!"—said the old gentleman, thrusting his thumbs into the arm-holes of his waistcoat, as he was accustomed to do whenever, in his solitary walks, his thoughts reverted to his graceless favourite.—"My son-in-law swears Fred will make one of the crack riders of England, as soon as he has worn down a little of his coxcombry.—Natural enough at *his* age, a little coxcombry, eh, Dowdeswell! —But, between ourselves, Cobham chooses to overlook that the young fellow has paid his price for his whistle. Fred was laid up with broken collar-bones three times the winter before last,—to say nothing of the cursed steeple-chase, where he broke the back of a mare worth three-hundred guineas, and was left insensible in a ditch, from a purl that ought to have broken his own head!"

"He was unlucky, I fear, at Chantilly Races," observed Lord Greville; aware, or fancying himself aware, that perfect confidence existed between the father and son, even on points usually kept sacred from paternal vigilance.

"No!—Fred did nothing at Chantilly, and he was right. No chance of either justice or judgment among such a set of cockney sportsmen as the French Jockey Club!"—observed the squire.

Greville was surprised, but remained prudently silent; Massingberd having informed him that a recent gift from his father was expressly intended to book up his Chantilly engagements.

"But I thought you told me you rode here together from the Woodlands?"—cried the squire, stopping short as they reached a gate opening through the old-fashioned orchard of Hill Hall, into its equally old-fashioned offices. "And here are the Greville Abbey servants just turning out!"—

"My mother, probably, on a visit to Mrs. Massingberd," observed the Earl, with one of

those vivid blushes of which even Paris had not effected the cure. And the squire, naturally conceiving that the simultaneous visit was an understood thing between the Countess and her son, felt the warmth expire in his heart which had kindled up at sight of his son's friend, the son of his old friend, whom he had fancied attracted to his house in spite of the Countess, by kindly feelings of regard.

Had the old gentleman been a better interpreter of the human countenance, he would have perceived not only that the Earl was unprepared to meet Lady Greville, but that he only wanted courage to take himself off to the Abbey without hazarding the encounter. His natural good-breeding forbad, however, an act so ungracious towards Mrs. Massingberd; and in a few minutes he was in the drawing-room, stammering through the civilities indispensable to the occasion; while the Countess looked on with a majestic countenance, worthy the forty centuries which Napoleon announced to his

Egyptian army as contemplating its movements from the summit of the pyramids.

It was difficult to retain his usual urbanity of manner under such severe inspection. Nevertheless, he contrived to make proper inquiries after Lady Cobham,—her cross husband and sickly children,—glad or sorry at the proper pauses in Mrs. Massingberd's lengthy family details; and when subjected, in his turn, to the old lady's questions touching her son, he tried to recover his usual spirits and allude gaily to the London diversions of his friend.

"We shall have him here shortly, I suppose?" observed Mrs. Massingberd, divesting herself of the radiant air with which she alluded to the Cobham portion of her progeniture. "But that the preserves at Hill Hall are tolerably good, I doubt whether I should ever have the honour of seeing my son, (except in one of Count d'Orsay's sketches,) now that I no longer go to town for the season."

"And, by the way, Fred mentioned to me in

his last letter, my Lord, that he was engaged to you in October for pheasant shooting!" observed the old gentleman, as a check to the ill-nature of his spouse.

"You told me in Paris that *September* was the month in which you had promised some shooting to your friend?" demanded Lady Greville, in a tone far from likely to increase the cordiality of the party.

So defying, indeed, was her voice and manner, that the Earl, vexed at finding himself what he considered shewn up in presence of the Massingberds and Dowdeswell, found courage to reply—"September *was* the period fixed for our *battue;* but the moment of my return from the Continent is so uncertain, that I have lately requested Fred to be with me the middle of October."

Lady Greville sat almost breathless. She was now, however, too well acquainted with the tender mercies of the neighbour she had in-

sulted, to hazard an explosion of wrath in presence of Mrs. Massingberd.

"The Continent?"—exclaimed the squire,—unmindful of the agitation of either party. "What, off again?—why I was in hopes that between old Brooks for public life, and one or other of the Almack's beauties for private, we should have nailed you down among us during your stay in town?—There's some excuse for Fred to be a rover. Fred knows that the old boy, his father, has no mind to put off his shoes before he goes to bed,—and that Hill Hall and its acres are not wide enough to afford occupation (or pottering) for both of us. But you, my dear lord, who have a stake in the country!—*You* who are wanted here,—you—"

"You would make me very proud or very vain, if I durst believe you!" interrupted Greville, who saw his mother's eyes fixed glaringly upon his countenance. "But I can assure you that my friend Massingberd and myself may be

trusted abroad. We are genuine John Bulls at heart."

"You can't say what you may both be this time twelvemonths, if you get the habit of Frenchifying every time you find yourself dull in England!"—cried the squire. "Fred had the impudence to write me word t'other day, he would as soon be rolled up in a leaden coffin at once, as live in smoky England. I told him in my answer that the English are all the racier for being smoke-dried.—Ha! ha! ha!—Providence built us for our coal-pits, and our coal-pits for us. The sulphur of sea-coal preserves us against the humidity of the atmosphere. Dr. Anodyne will give you chapter and verse concerning a thousand diseases for which sea-coal smoke is a specific.—Ask Dr. Anodyne!—Dr. Anodyne is a favourite authority, you know, at Greville Abbey!"

It did not surprise Lord Greville to find his mother, at that moment, rise and ring for her carriage. Prepared by previous irritation, she

saw in this attack upon her favourite pacha, a personal insult. Her son's allusion to the old squire the preceding night as the friend of his father, the secrecy observed by Hugo that morning concerning his visit to Hill Hall, which she believed to be preconcerted for the purpose of consultation, all conspired to thwart and excite her; and Mrs. Massingberd, who on her own inauspicious visit to Greville Abbey had been favoured with a specimen of the violence into which the quietest stream may be lashed up by stress of weather, began to hope that her ladyship was brewing a storm likely to make itself remembered.

She departed, however, without an outburst. The same hissing murmur of inarticulate compliments passed between Lady Greville and Mrs. Massingberd, during their parting curtsies, that usually graces the adieux of elderly ladies, denizens of a country neighbourhood, who mutually wish each other at the bottom of each other's fish-ponds.

Greville was careful to loiter behind, while Dowdeswell and the squire escorted his mother to her phaeton, hoping the former would find occasion to allude to the accidental nature of their visit; more particularly when Mr. Massingberd returned, before the carriage drove from the door, having left the agent to place in her ladyship's hands the reins which the jocose old gentleman could not help trusting, as he hobbled back into the drawing-room, she might not, after her usual fashion, draw too tight.

Excited by the pleasure of seeing the young Earl under his roof in the same friendly way he had been accustomed, twenty years before, to see his father, he could not forbear indulging in a piece of squirearchical hospitality, and persuading his visitors to stay dinner. He even pressed the invitation earnestly on Greville when, upon Dowdeswell's return to them, he discerned from the agent's anxious face that such a breach of etiquette would be treason in the eyes of the Countess.

"For the love of goodness, Mr. Massingberd, what put it into your head to invite Lord Greville to stay and dine with us?" cried his wife, as soon as the swing gate had closed after their horses. "Lord Greville, of Greville Abbey, sitting down to our roast mutton—"

"With his vulgar agent and our two stupid selves!—Out with it, my dear, for fear it should choke you!"—interrupted the squire. "What made me ask him?—why, because I'm pretty certain the young fellow would have been glad enough to come. Do you suppose he wouldn't rather pass the evening in talking about country matters and field-sports, with Dowdeswell and me, than sit watching his mother snip ends of worsted yonder at Greville Abbey?—Dowdeswell told me just now it was the lad's own proposal to drop in here; and when I saw how plaguy black the lady of your own condition of life looked at finding her son paying a neighbourly visit without her knowledge, egad I thought it would be a good lesson for her to

keep him till night,—and send him home with his courage topped by a bottle of the old Madeira his father used to be so fond of!"—

"If you wish to ask him to dine with you, why not do it in a proper way?"

"There is always a proper time, my dear, for doing things in a proper way,—and a proper time for doing them in an improper way.—Besides, Madam Semiramis would easily find means to circumvent a dinner at Hill Hall, at a week's notice; while to-day, though it would have made her as mad as Bedlam had the young man stayed with us, she could no more have prevented it than flown. However, I have a shrewd notion this tyranny will shortly be overpast. Unless I'm much mistaken, I discern a character about young Greville's mouth and eyebrows, such as I never saw there till to-day. Cymon has found his Iphigenia; and between them, if they don't contrive to oust the dowager—well, well!—I beg your pardon for speaking such plain English!—If you wont

shrug your shoulders, I will say it in a hand-
somer manner;—if they do not contrive to marry,
—settle at Greville Abbey,—and unsettle the lady
of your own [illegible] of life, *I am under an*
erroneous impre[illegible]*here!*—there's a touch of
Lord Brooks[illegible]my dear;—and you know
you have alw[illegible]ys[illegible]sneaking kindness for the
peerage!"

CHAPTER XI.

Chang'd, chang'd! I feel that thou art chang'd;
Though change thou dost deny!—
I feel it as the storm is felt
Ere seen upon the sky.—
Thy looks are cold,—thy voice hath lost
Its low peculiar tone,—
Till now, I never knew how much
I felt thou wert my own.

LADY STEPNEY.

LORD GREVILLE'S solitary ride home, after parting with Dowdeswell at the gate of his modest habitation on the outskirts of the domain, was far from propitious to the maintenance of his filial subordination. He had never seen his mother to such disadvantage as during her visit

to Hill Hall. With the Massingberds, h
tone was cold and haughty, — with hims
almost imperious; her former grace and suav
seemed to have forsaken her.

Or was it that the spell of fascination v
broken by her confession of fraud,—of i
posture? — Since the preceding night, s
seemed changed as by the wand of an enchant
She was grown older, paler, severer. Eitl
remorse had kept her sleepless, or the sca
had fallen from the eyes of her son.

When they met at dinner, Greville was s
more struck by the alteration. But thou
touched by her air of indisposition, it was s
with the feeling of superiority arising from c
scious rectitude. As she sat facing him, c
and silent, he strove to entertain her with
tails of all he had seen and heard at Squeami
ton and on his tour of inspection. But
proportion as Lady Greville noticed his tone
self-possession, her own became more waveri
She saw that her son had ascended his throne

the throne of his own mind,—and that she must henceforth humble herself in his presence.

It was now *her* turn to recede. If the Earl appeared in a new character, his mother was scarcely less metamorphosed. She wished to temporize,—she would gladly have avoided the impending explanation.—When the newspapers, forwarded by the morning coach, were placed on the dessert-table, instead of allowing them to lie in their covers as was usually the case with one who cared too much for her own affairs to interest herself deeply in those of the world, she requested Hugo to read aloud the leading article from the Times,—the news from Egypt,—China,—Lloyd's,—and would have condescended to the casualties of the railroads and Serpentine river, but that her motive for desiring to supersede conversation between them, must have been too apparent. It was indeed a relief when the time expired, which, according to the ceremonious formalities of the house, entitled her to quit the dining-room.

It happened to be one of those genial nights in which a full moon sometimes renews, at the beginning of autumn, the warmth of summer;—the effulgent August moon, termed by the French *la lune des vendanges*, and often used as daylight by the industrious Flemish, to secure their second hay-harvest.

Attracted by the balmy atmosphere that saluted him through the open windows of the great hall, after quitting the heated dining-room, Greville stepped out beneath the gothic portico, whose stone vases were filled with flowering orange trees, to luxuriate in the delicious fragrance and tranquil moonlight; and by degrees, was tempted to prolong his walk, till he found himself strolling through the shrubberies at some distance from the house.

In another moment, he was startled by the sight of an advancing figure,—a female figure,—the figure of his mother!—

What business had she there at such a time?

It had been nothing extraordinary for any other woman to be found enjoying a delicious night in a delicious garden, secure from danger or intrusion. But the Countess was so thoroughly a creature of habit, and it was so completely *out* of her habit to exert herself for her own enjoyment, that Greville felt almost as much overawed as if one of the marble statues in the hall had descended from its pedestal to wander forth and meet him by the way!

Each would gladly have avoided the other, had it been possible. But there was nothing for it but to meet and continue their walk together; taking refuge in generalities about "a second summer,—finer than at midsummer," enlivened with the usual prediction that "it would be a wonderful season for the hop-growers."—With all their mutual discontents, it was impossible not to enjoy the exquisite charm of such a scene and such an hour.

"We should have been glad of such a night

as this a fortnight ago, for Lady Mary Carmichael's breakfast," observed Greville, by way of general conversation. "Nothing could be better imagined than the fête she had prepared; but thanks to the variabilities of our climate, a bitter evening interfered with our projects. The green lamps intended to represent glow-worms seemed hung among icicles; while those who ventured on the water, were armed with an intention of attempting the North Western passage!—Though the middle of July, it was far colder than the night you may recollect in May, at the Hotel de St. Pierre."

Lady Greville *did* recollect; she only wished she could have forgotten! For the coolness with which her son referred to the circumstance, convinced her that nothing now would daunt him from his purpose. So instant indeed was her conviction that, without further preliminary, she demanded—"You persist, then, in going to Normandy?"

"You heard me say so to old Massingberd this morning."

"In that case, I have only one further request to make!" she continued, dropping her son's arm, which she had accepted on meeting him; "that you allow Dowdeswell to read to you to-morrow (when he will meet you here at any hour you may appoint) those clauses of your father's will referring to the restrictions upon your minority."

"I will meet Dowdeswell, or any one else you choose, my dear mother," replied the Earl. "But let me forewarn you, in the first instance, that nothing they can say to me,—nothing contained in my father's will,—will in the slightest degree influence my conduct. For some time to come, I have no power over my property.—I know it,—I do not complain,—for complaint were useless. But no legal document can have deprived me of the use of my senses,—of my faculties,—of my right to feel and act as may become a man. If you wish me to retain

the repute and honour of one in the eyes of the world, do not attempt to reduce me to utter insignificance, by too arbitrary an exercise of the authority with which you are invested by the unlucky confidence of my father."

"Hugo, you know not of what you are talking!"—cried the Countess, in a tone of increasing bitterness. "It *is* to preserve your repute and honour in the eyes of the world, that I persist in the exercise of my rights. In all other things, your will shall be my law;—but I repeat that the marriage you contemplate is impossible."

"Impossible is a woman's word!"—cried the Earl, with indignant impetuosity. "To a strong mind and willing heart, nothing is impossible! But, in this instance, there is not even a difficulty to surmount!"

"Do you account for nothing difference of religion?"—demanded the Countess, in a faltering voice.

"I am no bigot," replied Greville. "So my

wife be a conscientious Catholic, the difference of creed between us is of small account. Nay, mother, I have too often heard you express a similar opinion, and revered your Christian spirit of toleration, to fear that the Catholicism of Mademoiselle de Nangis should constitute any serious objection in your eyes."

Lady Greville was silent. On such a point, she felt that hypocrisy were a crime of double magnitude.

"Let me hope, therefore," continued the Earl, encouraged by her silence; "let me earnestly hope that the merits of Eugénie—"

"No merits of hers,—no strength of attachment on your part,—would sway me from my purpose!"—cried Lady Greville. "Oh! that I dared trust you—that I dared confide in you!"—she continued, with a sudden and frantic change of tone that seemed to freeze the blood within the veins of her son. "You call me tyrant,—you think me unjust,—capricious!—I,—who

through every vicissitude of my miserable life, have studied nothing but your welfare—"

"Vicissitude,—miserable!"—reiterated Greville, in utter amazement.

"Consider," resumed the Countess, not heeding his interruption, "consider what I risk by this bold opposition to your will!—I lose everything, Hugo; for your love—your confidence—are all that is dearest to me on earth!—Tell me, is it decreed,—can it really be,—that the mother who for twenty wretched years has lived in you and for you, must be cast aside to avenge a baffled whim, a mere caprice,—yes, caprice; for at this moment, you are the sport of wavering affections; while *mine*,—a love passing the love of women,—is fixed with unvarying steadiness upon my child!"—

"Why,—why,—have you not always addressed me thus!" cried Greville, taking her unresisting hand, and drawing it within his arm.

"I know," resumed the Countess, in a still

more broken voice, "that there must have been moments in your young life, when my authority was a heavy burden. Long have I dreaded the moment when the consciousness of manhood would bring the consciousness of dependence. For years, I tried to isolate you from companionship likely to quicken your discovery of the vexatiousness of such a yoke—"

"Mother—"

"Nay! I am fully aware that your early affection for me was such as to prevent your being accosted with sarcasms upon the peculiarities of our relative position.—I knew it,—I felt it,—and loved you a thousand-fold the more for the devotedness of your filial affection!—But this authority, Hugo, to *you* so insupportable, was not of my seeking,—was imposed upon me,—imposed with terrible restrictions,—and at an age when I scarcely understood the weight of the obligations I was contracting. If at this moment I could fling it aside,—if at any moment since you acquired the stature and understand-

ing of a man, I could have done so, leaving you the immunities and privileges of your class, trust me, I had not hesitated;—*trust me*. But why do I talk thus wildly!—I,—hitherto so guarded, so circumspect, am allowing myself—" she paused. A deep silence ensued, which Lord Greville dared not interrupt; for, as well as their footsteps echoing in the still moonlight would allow, he fancied that suppressed sobs were quickening the respiration of his mother.

"I know," cried she at length, gasping for breath when she found her arm compassionately pressed by her son. "I know that the world has upbraided me as interested,—as despotic,—as cold,—as haughty!—By our neighbours here, by a still wider circle elsewhere, you have been painted as a victim, I as a tyrant—

a dowager
Long withering out a young man's revenue!

I have borne this! Indifferent to the opinion of the world,—loving you and you only,—I

submitted to all imputations rather than hazard an injury to the interests of my son. But since last night, Hugo, I have experienced a trial for which I had never prepared myself; — your scorn,—your contempt. The withering expression of your lip when I owned that I had stooped to a deception in order to bring you back from Paris, cut me to the soul;—from that moment, your look has not been absent from my thoughts."

"'Reflect," said Greville, in a low agitated voice, "reflect, dearest mother, on my long reliance upon your integrity,—upon your own lessons of honour and veracity.—If for years I reverenced your word as that of a being belonging to a higher sphere—"

"You torture me beyond your power of comprehension!" cried the agitated Lady Greville. "My life has been a tissue of falsehoods! — towards the world, — towards you, my nearest and dearest,—a tissue of falsehoods! — But not of my own weaving,

Hugo. I have been a slave to the impositions of others."

Convinced that his mother's reason was forsaking her, and that his sudden resistance must be the origin of her bewilderment, Greville could scarcely subdue his emotion so far as to exercise what he conceived the necessary control over his unfortunate companion. At a little distance, on a green nook of lawn opening from the shrubberies to command a view of the distant country, stood an alcove, towards which he hurried her, in order to obtain time for the concentration of his faculties.

"Compose yourself, dearest mother,—compose yourself,"—said he, in the soothing voice in which passionate children are addressed, while placing her on the rustic bench and taking a seat by her side.

"No, Hugo,—I am not losing my senses," replied the Countess, at once detecting the nature of his anxiety. "I am only too much myself,—only too rational.—I do not wonder,

my poor son, at your alarm. After viewing for years the specious mask under which I have forced myself to conceal the terrors of an anxious heart, I need not be surprised to find you startled by even an ordinary demonstration of feeling,—far more by the outbursts of my overcharged heart!"

"Mother, mother!—if, indeed, these emotions be not the result of delusion of mind," cried Greville, unable to contain himself, "I beseech you, do not torture me by such mysterious allusions. In God's name, what is it you dread, —what is it that torments you thus,—what is the evil influence that has embittered a life so surrounded with the prosperities of this world?—You cannot intend to mock me by thus exciting my curiosity!—No; you mean to vouchsafe me ample explanations!—Speak, mother!—who is your enemy?—where lies your danger?"—

"'No one is my enemy, I trust," replied Lady

Greville, in a calmer voice. "The danger, Hugo, is for yourself. Were I alone threatened, you had not seen me thus excited!"

"Danger—to *me*?—I have injured no one, —I have offended no one,"—said the Earl, still more and more astonished. "Be more explicit, I entreat you—"

"I dare not,—I cannot!"—interrupted his mother. "Though I perceive the impossibility of excluding you longer from my confidence, I find it equally impossible to deposit in your bosom the secret which to my own has proved a deep and withering curse!"

"Not confide in me?" cried Greville. "Have you no trust in my discretion,—in my honour?——"

"In both;—and yet—tell me!" cried Lady Greville, turning suddenly towards her son with streaming eyes and uplifted hands; "have you no presentiment,—no suspicion?"—

"None,—on my conscientious word, *none*!" replied the Earl, solemnly. "You are speaking

riddles to me. And but for the sad earnestness of your countenance, I should fancy you sporting with my credulity."

"You will not hesitate, then, to afford me your word that no earthly or unearthly consideration shall prevail upon you to divulge, to any mortal breathing, what you force me to disclose?"

"A secret confided in trust to me by my mother?"—cried Greville, agitated almost beyond the power of utterance. "Surely there can be no need for such a pledge!"—

"Still less, then, to withhold it!"

"I do not withhold it. I promise, by all that ismost sacred upon earth, that no temptation shall induce me to reveal one syllable of the communication you seem disposed to make me! —Only one word!—If it involve a confession of guilt such as it would be death for a son to gather from the lips of his mother, pity me,—spare me,—or at least give me time to submit myself to so agonizing an infliction!"

"No, Hugo—no, my darling son,—my idolized son!"—cried Lady Greville, flinging her arms wildly round his neck, and pressing her lips to his cold cheek. "On that ground, you have nothing to dread. I am all that you have ever thought me, when you thought best of me.—Nay, I am more;—for when I passed for cold and arbitrary, I was but subduing my feelings, I was but assuming an authority indispensable to the welfare of my child. *I* was to be pitied then, Hugo!—But it is you,—*you*, my noble, my injured boy who are to be pitied now; for though still my son,—still beloved,—still good, still wise,—"

"Mother!"—

"Forgive me for delaying the fatal word—"

"Oh! mother, mother!"—

"Though all this, my child,—all this, and more,—you are an outcast,—illegitimate,—robbed of your birthright on the very threshold of life!"—

It did not surprise Lady Greville that no answer was conceded to this passionate invocation. It did not surprise her that, pale, breathless, gasping as for life, poor Greville sat reclined by her side, praying the sky above his head to fall and overwhelm him.

"Yet I am not to blame," cried she, suddenly apprehending that such a declaration might again involve her in a charge of criminality. "No less a victim than yourself, the marriage vow which rendered me to the eyes of the world a Countess, was valid in my own. I knew of no impediment. How was I to suppose that a man of honour, a peer of the realm, would venture to approach a woman of his own high condition with proposals that might expose himself to the rigour of the offended laws of his country, and *her* to years of shame and remorse?—Shall I tell it you word by word,—my poor boy?—shall I disclose to you step by step the iniquities to which we fell a sacrifice?"—

"I have not strength or courage to bear

it *now!*" murmured Greville, starting up, as if stung by some noisome reptile. "The blow has struck home. I feel it as you must have expected,—as you perhaps intended.—But do not wantonly sport with the weapon still rankling in the wound." He stood for a moment firm and erect in the moonlight, wiping the cold dews from his forehead, and struggling to recover some show of manly composure. Bu it would not do. Again he sank into his seat, and covering his face with his hands, burst into an agony of tears.

At the close of some minutes undisturbed indulgence of his grief, he whispered, "Yes, you are right.—Better I should know the worst at once.—Say on, mother;—how was it that this evil fell upon us, which you seem to feel more bitterly for me than for yourself?"—

His hand was clasped between those of the Countess, ere she found utterance for the following explanations:—

"I need not allude to my origin. You have

seen in our metropolitan church, Hugo, the monument voted by parliament to my gallant father who fell at Valenciennes; and are aware that the long-enduring devotion to his memory of my mother, Lady Margaret Fordyce, necessitated the completion of my education in strict retirement. Towards the widow and only child of its faithful servant, government was as liberal as a multitude of similar claims, even at the commencement of a war that threatened to be long and disastrous, would admit. Our pension, and the small fortune inherited by my father as younger son of a Scottish earl, scarcely, however, enabled us to maintain the appearance due to our station in society; till apartments were assigned us in Hampton Court Palace, by the especial interference of the kind old King, the personal friend of my father.

"So passed my early days. I was a feeble child;—feeble by nature,—feeble through the excessive watchfulness awaiting a widow's only

child. Scarcely an hour of the day or night did I quit my mother's presence. My education was her work,—limited, alas! by the contracted bounds at that period assigned to the accomplishments of women of noble birth. But she taught me something better than superficial acquirements;—both by precept and example she taught me the humble virtue of patience. She was herself the slave of narrow circumstances, and I was hers; for till I was a woman, I never knew what it was to have expressed a will. Such was then the form of English society.—It has altered strangely since,—another generation must decide whether it have altered for the better.

"I attained to womanhood, my dear Hugo, without the consciousness of a passion or an ambition. The grand object of my poor mother's life was the prudent application of her slender income; and the day which caused no unusual excess of expenditure appeared a day well spent. When alone together, her talk was

ever of economy,—of domestic management. There was nothing expansive in her mind. One of a numerous and ill-provided family, it was thus she had been reared; how could she do otherwise than bestow a similar cast of mind upon the sharer of her scanty fortunes?—

"It was the great event of our year, when, by careful management, we were enabled to exchange the monotony of Hampton Court for a few weeks by the seaside in autumn, at some minor bathing place, such as Broadstairs or Worthing. The gaieties of London were, of course, beyond our sphere.—They were even a forbidden theme between my mother and myself. For the poor to dwell on the enjoyments of the rich, is almost a crime; and Lady Margaret was careful to point out to me that a breach of the ninth commandment by such as ourselves, equals the infringement of the eighth, by those who do lack and suffer hunger.

"In spite, however, of her wise admonitions, I *was* envious of the prosperity of others. At

Hampton Court, I was ever in contact with persons of her own condition in life, who enjoyed, without restraint, the luxuries I felt to be her due:—which, as she advanced in life, became almost necessaries,—and which I saw no prospect of administering to her enjoyment. My young life became embittered by the thought. For myself, I had never looked forward,—for *her* I became far-sighted. The only hope that presented itself to my imagination, was a marriage enabling me to afford a home to her declining years;—a home for which she need not ascend such wearisome flights of stairs,—and wherein delicate food and abundant fuel would not be grudged by her conscientious calculations.

"But, alas! this hope was all but chimeric. I was no beauty,—I possessed no showy accomplishments,—I had not even the chance of other girls thrust into the glittering pageant of fashionable life by the speculation of reckless parents. Judge, therefore, how great my joy when, one

autumn at Tonbridge Wells, the rich Earl of Greville, prepossessed by the very simplicity of manners and mind which I had supposed fatal to my attractions, became a suitor for my hand! He was more than twenty years my senior, indeed;—an invalid,—grave,—reserved;—yet there was something in his calm urbanity more consonant with my character and habits of life, than the vivacity of younger men.

"Even had I been less disposed to find or fancy merits in the first human being who had gratified my vanity by a declaration of attachment, the generous warmth with which he made it a condition of our marriage that my mother should become our inmate for the remainder of her days, would have produced a strong impression on my heart. Men are not fond of a mother-in-law planted everlastingly by their fireside, in judgment upon their actions; and often, when I had avowed to my mother my projects for such a happy close of her existence, she used to entreat me never to

breathe, in presence of any other human being, an intention fatal to my establishment in life.

"Lord Greville, however, forestalled my wishes. It was he who, despising the idea of domestic jealousies, insisted that Lady Margaret should occupy in his house the place which, had she survived, he would have assigned to his own mother.

"With such a lover, Hugo, judge whether we were disposed to caution!—We were two isolated women. Lady Margaret knew nothing of business beyond the forms necessary for the receipt of her pension; and the Earl of Greville, so open-handed, so noble-minded, who rejected all mention of fortune on my part, yet provided for me more liberally than had been done for the Countess who brought the richest dowry into the family, was accepted without reserve, without condition.

"I was very happy. It becomes me not now to speak of your father,—*not now*,—when you

are smarting under the sense of injury caused by his errors. Yet, amid all your sorrow, my dearest son, be justice done to the memory of the dead!—A man more kindly-hearted, more sensitive to the welfare of others than the late Earl, never yet trod the earth. His heart was softness itself.—He was mild, humane, forbearing.—He loved much,—yea, all the creatures of God, for the sake of Him who gave them being. Do not undervalue this precious gift,—the surest attribute of a heavenly nature!—Superiority of mind is a vulgar endowment compared with that refinement of charity which would wipe all tears from all faces; and which, in spite of rank and station, responds to the 'touch of nature making the whole world kin.'—

"Lord Greville was too infirm of health to admit of entering much into the world. We settled, as he had always projected, at the Abbey. By degrees, the little society we received there, became less;—by degrees, nothing. We lived alone. Yet I was more than content.

Neither my mother nor myself had any taste for the tumults of life. My garden, my village, my fireside occupations, filled up the routine of my days;—till that crowning event—that event more instinct with joy than it is in the heart of man to conceive,—the birth of my child—*my son!* The tenants talked of him as the heir;—my poor mother never called him otherwise than Lord Rowsleigh—'my grandson, the young Lord Rowsleigh.' Your father and myself, as with tearful eyes we pressed each other's hands over your cradle, called you our own—our only;—and the bliss that was in that name and that sympathy, Hugo, is beyond the reach of words!—

"It seemed strange to *me*, indeed, with whom that triumphant feeling was paramount, that it should not suffice to restore health and joyfulness to my husband.—Yet even when you grew old enough to recognise and repay his caresses, Lord Greville remained sad and sickly. I often surprised him in solitary reflection; sometimes, in tears. Yet such is the deference involuntarily tes-

tified by the healthy towards the depression of an habitual invalid, that I never referred to the cause of these secret afflictions. I have since recollected that he received letters, which, in spite of the confidence existing between us, he did not offer to communicate. Like myself, he was an only child; family secrets had consequently no share in his reserve. If I noticed it at the time, however, it was only to lament that the unexplained correspondence invariably produced an increase of indisposition and despondency.

"The world, meanwhile, took little heed of what was passing at Greville Abbey. We were despised, I fancy, by the connexions of the two families, as obscure, domestic people, unworthy the prosperities heaped upon us by Providence. Strangers occupied the old apartments at Hampton Court. My mother had resigned her pension; and we were now a single family — three generations dwelling united under one happy

roof. It seemed as if no evil, no sorrow could come near us—save the casualties which not even palace gates avail to shut out!

"Thus it was with us, Hugo;—and I linger on the relation,—for then was the crowning season of my earthly comfort!—

"One day—I had risen with the same thoughtless, fearless elation of spirit that brightened every morning of my prosperous life;—I had given thanks to God, as usual, for a day of coming happiness;—I had, as usual, blessed my lovely child, and received the daily blessing of my mother;—when, on proceeding to Lord Greville's dressing-room to inquire after his health, which had struck me, the preceding day, as more impaired than usual, I found him extended almost lifeless on the sofa—a letter, half crushed, within his clenched hand!—

"My first impulse was to ring for help; but a feeble gesture from my husband restrained the movement.

"'I must have no help but yours,' said he, 'for in no other friend can I put my trust.'

"Then, clinging to my hands, he pressed them to his lips with such convulsive fervour, that I thought, (as you, my poor boy, appeared to fear just now for your mother,) that reason was deserting him.

"'You have no other friend in whom you trust,' said I, hoping to soothe his excited feelings, 'because your fond partiality has led you to content yourself with the society of your fireside. Friends, dear Greville, troops of friends, you might have at will!'

"'None to whom I dare confide the secret I would fain confide to *you*,' he replied, in fluttering accents. 'None to whom I dare reveal my shame,—my danger,—as I am about to tell it to my wife: — my wife, the partner of my disgrace, —my wife, whom I have steeped in infamy!'—

"My utmost endeavours were now exerted to tranquillize his agitation. I dared not give

way to my own.—I dared not avow the interest —the vivid interest—excited by these dreadful denunciations. The physicians had too often assured me that the continuance of my husband's life depended on his security from all excessive emotion!—

"'You will not ask what fearful event has agitated me thus!' said he. 'You are wise! The knowledge must ever come too soon;—too soon for *you*—so young, so good, so pure, so blameless,—yet fated to share with myself the penalty of guilt.—Oh! Mary, Mary!—could we but bear it alone!—That there were none but ourselves to wither under the decree!'"

"'My child!'—cried I, unable at this allusion to control one moment longer the terrors of my soul. 'Speak, Greville,—if you would have me preserve my reason.'

"It was not, however, till after the lapse of many hours—many hours of soothing and solitude—that I wrung from him the story of my wrongs. I was not his wife,—*you*, not his son;

for in the eye of the law no human consanguinity attaches to the illegitimate!

"Like yourself, beloved Hugo, your father was an only child;—the son of a light-hearted libertine, carried off by dissipation in the flower of his days, after committing the heir of his name to the guardianship of one of his frivolous associates—a man of wit and pleasure about town. Under such authority, Lord Greville had found little difficulty in tracing plans for his own education. There wanted still some months to the attainment of his majority when he quitted Oxford; and instead of passing them in prudent retirement at Greville Abbey, he chose to proceed to Paris, on pretence of accomplishing himself in the lighter branches of what was then esteemed a polite education.

"All the lesson he learnt there, however, was repentance—deep and lasting repentance! Intemperance that planted the germ of future infirmity,—dissipation, engaging him in connexions that made him what he was, and left us

what we are—such, such were the results of his ill-starred expedition!—

"France was on the eve of the great Revolution that fixed the eyes of all Europe upon its enormities; and the disorganized state of society consequent upon such a crisis, produced a degree of moral recklessness, the fruitful parent of crime. Orgies of the wildest nature were the order of the day. Men's passions and faculties were in a perpetual state of excitement. Slight as were the hints afforded to me by your father of the nature of his pleasures, they are such as I dare not record in presence of his son. One admission, however, is inevitable. The partner of his follies,—the woman to whom, in the midst of all this ferment of dissipation, he fancied himself attached,—was the wife of another.

"Highly born and nobly married, her conduct was such as, even in the general depravation then prevailing, to produce her rejection from society.

"The penalty of noble birth still, however, impended over her; and some weeks ere the guillotine rendered her a widow, she emigrated to Germany, having secured the rash and inexperienced Greville as the partner of her flight. Under an assumed name, they lived together at Nuremberg as man and wife;—and it was rather an act of infatuation on your father's part than of compunction on her own, which induced them, on receiving tidings of the execution of her husband, to consolidate their union by legitimate ties. Irritated by the rivalship of a young Hessian officer of noble extraction, and eager to secure to himself the affections of one of the most worthless of her sex, Greville made her a hasty offer of his hand. Within a few days after the attainment of his majority, the ceremony was performed between them, by a minister of the Protestant church, a refugee like themselves, and like themselves involved in a career of libertinism and shame!

"As if to lose no time in bringing home to the infatuated man the rashness of his folly, her sins against this second tie of wedlock were even more flagrant than against the first!—A duel was the result; in which your father inflicted a severe wound upon the young Hessian who had superseded him in her smiles. Without hesitation, she immediately quitted his protection; deriding his claims upon her as untenable, and assuming the name and the title of the object of her new attachment.

"Overpowered with shame at his own folly, Lord Greville's sole consolation lay in her disavowal of their marriage. He determined to quit Nuremburg; trusting that all would be buried in oblivion within the walls of the city wherein he was known only by the assumed name conferred by the American passports with which he and his companion escaped from France.

"It was a stirring epoch.—The reign of

terror was not yet at an end; and throughout Europe, wars and rumours of wars distorted the fair face of society.—On Lord Greville's arrival in England, he became immediately involved in the settlement of the affairs of his minority. —His estate was encumbered,—his health impaired. — He became a recluse, — a valetudinarian,—a hypochondriac;—thankful only that the wretched woman to whom he had thus rashly devoted himself, had so quickly burst asunder the ties created in a moment of intoxication by the flightiness of boyhood.

"Humiliated by the disgrace in which he had involved himself, Greville naturally abstained from allusion to his foreign connexions. The English had fled the Continent ere he visited Germany. There were none to betray him—none to deride him.—After the lapse of a year, he began to question the reality of the scenes in which he had played so poor a part; after the lapse of many, almost forgot their very existence. Not a syllable reached him from

Germany,—not a syllable from France.—There was every probability that this miserable woman had terminated her career of folly in the grave. So complete was his conviction of this, that disgust for the marriage-state consequent upon his own experience, alone prevented his seeking another wife. He believed himself free; and when our accidental acquaintance inspired him with one of those sudden passions fated to control a human destiny, he was not a moment deterred from offering me his hand by scruples connected with the past.

"'Nay, long after our union,' said he, when these afflicting explanations eventually took place between us,—'long after our union, dearest Mary, if I recoiled from reference to my previous marriage, it was less from apprehension of its interference with your rights, than because I would not assail the ears of one so pure—so spotless,—with a tale of vice and crime in which I was an actor.

"'It was not,' continued he, 'till the very

eve of the birth of my son, that the fatal truth became known to me:—the Countess lived,—and my child was disinherited, as it were, on the threshold of life,—a victim ere he saw the light!—The Continent, so long closed by the seals of war and usurpation, was at length opened; and among others who profited by the return of peace to revisit their native country, was Blair,—the minister by whom my ill-starred union had been consecrated. He was a man of blasted character,—of disreputable pursuits.—To *him* the possession of my secret was a mine of wealth; for he knew that I would rather forfeit the moiety of my fortune than that she who dwelt in my bosom,—my trusting, my deceived Mary, should be precipitated to the dust by tidings of the survival of my wife.

" ' On the terrors which beset my mind, and which I had not the power to conceal from this man, did he found a system of villanous extortion. It was in vain I bought his silence,—his absence!—Still he returned,—still he

threatened. For what is to render binding a compact with one devoid of principle, who knows that by a single word he can destroy the happiness and honour of an opulent family!

" 'My life became a life of torment. Fear was perpetually upon my soul;—embittering my food,—disturbing my rest. Half the sufferings you ascribed to indisposition arose from the moral night-mare of a tortured mind. I became morose,—inconsistent,—reserved.—I no longer dared find myself alone with you. Ever on the eve of exposure, dreading from hour to hour that you might learn to hate me,—to regard me as an enemy,—I felt that every appeal to your tenderness, every acceptance of kindness at your hands, was an act of treachery.

" 'And now, Mary, all this is forced out of the depths of my soul, only because such poor justice as I may still render you—is at length at my disposal. This woman, this clinging, cleaving curse of my existence, is no more;—and I have to ask you again, as I asked you four years

ago, will you be my wife?—Oh, that I could say to our dear, unhappy child, be my lawful heir,—be my successor!—*That* blessing is denied me!—I can only say, be my heir so long as no insidious enemy interferes to canvass your claims!'

"'You desire that a new ceremony,—a real ceremony,—a valid ceremony,—should be performed between us?' said I, shuddering with a sense of my griefs, yet not daring to increase what I knew must be the anguish of his soul, by adverting to the injuries of my child. 'To what end?—for what purpose?—that I,—your concubine,—your mistress,—may become your lawful wife?—Alas! God knows my innocence of this offence.—In the eyes of Heaven, I am yours by the most sacred of ties!—Wherefore draw upon ourselves the attention of the world by so strange a measure!'

"I was desperate, Hugo. The earth seemed to have receded from my feet. I knew not to

what to trust, — to whom to confide myself. There was nothing true in my position—nothing real in the fabric of happiness and splendour wherein my soul had made its habitation!

"But why torture you, my poor boy, by the recapitulation of my feelings, when you are only too well able to estimate them by the bitterness of your own! It is only to the facts of the case I ought to direct your attention. Suffice it that, conquered by your father's entreaties, I consented to accompany him to town, and in an obscure parish of the metropolis become legitimately his wife. Our great object was to prevent suspicion from entering the mind of my mother. At her age, and with her views and principles, a revelation of the grievous truth would have been fatal.

"We succeeded in the concealment of our measures. No mortal living, save him by whose persevering cupidity my husband's soul had been so tortured, entertained the smallest idea of

the truth. But the happiness of my life was gone. Not alone the injury entailed upon my child,—not alone the mortification of being subject to the authority of the wretch in possession of our secret,—not alone the anguish of standing as a deceiver in presence of my mother, in presence of my GOD, — weighed insupportably upon my spirits;—but I had lost all trust in him to whom I had been devoted, heart and soul,—for better for worse, — to dwell with him in this world, in sickness and in health, till we slept together finally in the dust.—He had deceived me.—When my young heart expanded to him, as to its Maker, *he* had maintained reserves, —*he* had uttered specious falsehoods,—he had deceived—betrayed—"

"Mother!" interrupted Lord Greville, "reflect upon your recent avowal that he was guiltless of offence against any living thing — that he believed in the invalidity of his rash marriage—"

"Then why not confide it to me?"—interrupted Lady Greville in her turn. "Where

there is deceit, Hugo, there is consciousness of guilt. I own it,—perhaps to my shame,—*surely* to my shame since even you, my son, condemn me,—that from the hour of my husband's confession I never loved him again with the deferential tenderness of a wife. An evil thought—an evil feeling had interposed betwixt him and me.

"Instinct soon admonished him that it was no longer with us as before; that he had lost his hold on the affections so thoroughly his own; and his spirit sank oppressed under the consciousness. He felt that all was over for him in this world; and as if to punish me for my injustice rather than to conciliate my kinder interpretation, devoted the last months of his life to securing, by every means in his power, my worldly prosperity. His princely fortune was unentailed,—a very small portion of the family estates being hereditary with the title. He consequently so worded his will that, in the event of any unforeseen circumstance bringing to light

the unlawful nature of your claims, his property might still descend to his injured child.

"Satisfied, moreover, that the misfortunes of his life were owing to the premature enjoyment of his independence, he prolonged your minority, assigning to the hands of your mother an authority which I trust she has not abused.

"It was not long after the execution of a double will, and deeds carefully prepared and executed by his own hand, that your poor father experienced a fatal attack. Great were his sufferings—imminent his danger;—and it was in one of those crises of torture, when his existence from moment to moment appeared to hang upon the tranquillization of his mind, that I granted him the sacred promise he had so often attempted to extort from me, never to let my secret escape my lips to any mortal breathing, save my son;—never even to my son, till on the eve of accomplishing his majority, and under circumstances to render the revelation indispensable to his welfare.

"From the time of obtaining this solemn pledge, his mind seemed lightened of its cares. But he was a doomed man. He had only a few months to live. Thanks to his confidence in my word, those months were months of piety and peace.

"But by this exaction, he had deprived me of my last hope!—All I desired was to escape from the mazes of deception in which I found myself reluctantly involved; to retire from the pomps of life, with the fair boy who, if not a peer of the realm, had the noblest blood of England flowing in his veins; to make a friend, a confidant of my child!—But this solace was denied me. When my poor Greville expired, all that remained for me was to bear unassisted the burden of falsehood imposed upon me. Till then, I had never rightly understand the misery of my position; or the attachment which, in spite of all, had bound me to the dead. For now commenced the real season of my atonement.

"I felt, — I was conscious of feeling, — an hourly deterioration of my nature. Hypocrisy, like a corrupting rust, ate into the very texture of my mind.—Habitual dissimulation seemed to crush all the better impulses of my bosom. Afraid of being tempted to betray my trust, I laboured to repress every generous emotion that might elevate me above the vile cause to which I was devoted. I receded from society. —I surrounded myself with instruments, who might assist me in the task of isolating my son from too free a communication with the world. Dreading above all things to provoke your spirit of inquiry into the mysteries surrounding us, I not only did not dare cultivate for myself the joys of friendship, but was forced to deny to my boy the sweet comfort of having a friend!—I seemed a tyrant,—a despot; while myself the abject slave of circumstances which I despised!—

"It was only by imposing upon myself a wearisome routine of conduct,—a form of life,—

form even of countenance, — that I could manage to subdue my nature to the level I desired. I became a factitious being. The only joy allowed me was the idolization of my boy;—and *who* can tell,—who by any power of language could succeed in depicting, the force of that all-engrossing attachment!—My poor old mother often reproved me;—reproved me even upon the deathbed, from whose pillow I was labouring to extract the thorns,—with the overweening nature of my love for him who had superseded her in my affections!—

"But I was repaid, beloved child, by your attachment. You grew to be all I could desire, —all I had prayed for;—and soon, my anxieties became concentrated in the task of securing the stability of your destinies. The memory of your father's misfortunes was strong upon me. I dreaded the influence of the dissolute. I dreaded the result of wild connexions. If in after days my authority appear to have been too absolutely exercised, reflect upon all I

had to apprehend from your assumption of an independence which might lead to excesses similar to his own; or to the discovery of the evil consequences exemplified in your position!"

"Still, dearest mother," remonstrated Greville, in a mild but determined voice, "I cannot perceive the motive of your especial enmity towards Eugénie and her sister."

"Her sister, in the first instance, because I dreaded from *her* the same temptations which had assailed your father. But your attachment to Mademoiselle de Nangis threatened a still darker danger. By the laws of France, Hugo, it is indispensable to the validity of wedlock, that the marriage certificates of the parents of both parties should be produced, as well as the certificates of their birth. To *you*, my son, it is consequently interdicted to wed with a foreigner."

"Not so, mother!"—replied Greville, labouring to rally his spirits from the deep despon-

dency into which he had sunk during the narrative of his mother. "You cannot suppose that I,—a man,—a man of honour,—will connive in the imposture to which I have been made an unwilling party. It is my intention—"

"It is *not* your intention to do aught that would bring the grey hairs of your mother with sorrow to the grave!"—cried Lady Greville, with deep emotion. "No; though your own voice told me so, I would not believe it!—You *could* not add that crowning misery to the destiny of a woman so sinned against as I have been;—a woman whom confidence in your affection has enabled to bear up against twenty years of bitterness;—a woman who has—"

"You say rightly!—I *could* not!"—interrupted Greville. "It is *I*, who, in this as in all else, must become the sacrifice. It is *my* nature that must be henceforward deteriorated by the cherishing of my hypocrisy,—it is I who must be weighed down by bearing about the consciousness of falsehood,—the consciousness of shame—"

"My son, my son!"

"But it is too true that I would gladly suffer all this and more, rather than add one sorrow to your crown of thorns. The disgrace of this hateful business, mother, shall never fall on *you!*—"

"Not even on my grave!" added Lady Greville, in a low voice. "Promise me, that when I am no more, you will respect your pledge?"—

"Trust to my good faith, without the exaction of further promises!" cried Lord Greville. "Thank heaven I am exonerated from the vileness of being a robber! My fortunes, you assure me, are mine by bequest. It is only the barren title of which I am defrauding Horace Greville,—Horace,—a fellow whom I have so thoroughly despised!—how little surmising that to *him* I ought to be in my turn an object of contempt!"—

"So far as in my power, I have not spared compensation," observed Lady Greville. "Remember the noble income he receives from you,

as the nominal agent of your Yorkshire estate; nay, it has been my condition with Lord Brooke, that he should have the preference over every other candidate for your boroughs, a concession which his own infirmities fortunately rendered fruitless!"

Lord Greville was unable to restrain a gesture of despair; as if the gradual development of the thousand falsehoods and impositions necessitated by his situation, was too much for his fortitude.

"I, at least," said he, "will never profit by my position to impose myself on the country as a legislator. Of late, I had begun to look forward with ambition to parliamentary distinctions,—but this must never be!—Nothing must be that could embellish or bless my existence—No matter!—Mother, let us return to the house! —The night advances.—You have need of rest after all this emotion, all these trying retrospections."—

"No; my mind is lightened of a burden!" cried Lady Greville. "If you knew how long,

how ardently, I have desired this hour of confidence!"

"Your mind is lightened of a burden, because henceforward its weight is transferred to *me!*" said Greville, bitterly. "Be it so. I accept my cross, and must learn to bear it humbly."

"My sorrow will have lost little of its heaviness," faltered Lady Greville, as, rising slowly, she took his arm to return to the house, "if I am fated to perceive, as your manner forewarns me, that I have lost the affections of my son. My cares have been many,—Hugo, my tears bitter.—But the sharpness of the serpent's tooth is yet to come, if I am to learn that all has been borne in vain, for the sake of an estranged and thankless child!"

The burst of tears which followed this afflicting apostrophe were shed upon the bosom of her son. Tenderly and pityingly did he strain her to his heart. Even at the moment of that

grievous trial, the noble-minded Greville beheld in her the first object of his life.—There would come a time hereafter to wrestle with the afflictions exclusively his own.—

END OF VOL. II.

T. C. Savill, Printer, 107, St. Martin's L

GREVILLE:

OR,

EASON IN PARIS.

BY MRS. GORE,

AUTHORESS OF

"MRS. ARMYTAGE," "THE PEERESS," ETC.

English people,—English people!—why can you not stay
perish of apoplexy and Yorkshire pudding at home?"—
PELHAM.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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GREVILLE;

OR,

A SEASON IN PARIS.

CHAPTER I.

Childe Harold had a mother, not forgot,
Though parting from that mother he did shun!—
Yet deem not thence his breast a breast of steel,
Ye who have known what 'tis to dote upon
A few dear objects, will in sadness feel
Such partings break the heart they fondly hope to heal.

BYRON.

MORE than a year had elapsed since the fortunes and peace of mind of Lord Greville were shattered by the startling blow conveyed in the confessions of his mother, when, one gloomy November afternoon, a travelling carriage, whose extreme simplicity was apparent

even through the thick coating of mud disfiguring the panels, drew up before the door of the Hotel Voltaire, in the Rue de Lille.

The young man who alighted from it, unaccompanied by a single attendant, was apparently in infirm health. His form and face, though of distinguished beauty, were sallow and emaciated, —his movements languid,—and in his large grey eyes shone none of the vivacity or intelligence becoming his age and condition. For it was the young Earl of Greville, worn down by sorrow and suffering, returning, after prolonged absence, to his native country.

He was come from the East,—from the climes to which men of ardent minds are apt to turn for excitement or consolation, when irritated by cares arising out of the forms of civilized life. In the first moments of distraction succeeding the shock occasioned by his mother's communications, unable to meet her with composure,—apprehensive, every moment, of inflicting reproach by his air of sadness or

abstraction,—he perceived the impossibility of a longer sojourn at the Abbey; and determined on a cruise of some duration, as the only mode of absenting himself calculated to relieve her anxieties with regard to his continental predilections.

He quitted home without a farewell interview;—he dared not expose his fortitude to the trial of his mother's tears. He felt for *her* almost more than for himself. Next to himself, indeed, she seemed to him of all created beings the most deserving compassion. But what availed such sympathy?—The more indulged, the more they became mutually disposed to aggravate each other's wrongs and sorrows.

"During my absence, she will learn to create for herself other interests in life!" mused the Earl. "For *me*, movement and excitement are at this moment indispensable; while for *her*, no less essential is the lesson of dispensing with my presence!"

Without a word of warning, accordingly,

Greville quitted the Abbey,—a spot to which he had conceived the strongest aversion. A few days before, on arriving there, he had contemplated the beauties of the place with triumph; as a scene to which he was about to transplant the persons dearest to him, to whom the delicious home scenery of an English park, with its majestic timber and grassy glades, must afford a new sense of enjoyment. But now, in his altered state of feeling, he threw himself into a corner of the carriage, as though eager to shut out all view of a place to which he was attached by ties fraught with dishonour.

All he desired, was to rend asunder every association connecting him with home. The project, however, was suggested by his mother. When, in the first outbreak of his despair, he had enlarged to Lady Greville upon the impossibility of confronting honest men, such as Dowdeswell,—Massingberd,—Brooks,—Hardy, —with the consciousness of falsehood betraying itself in every feature, his mother had eagerly

reminded him of the eligibility of absenting himself for a time, and of the wideness of the world as a theatre of human enjoyment. She foresaw that he must return home for comfort after the weariness of much travel,—the window of the ark being ever open to welcome the truant bird; and right gladly had her son accepted the hint,—eager to explore that "world elsewhere," which she pointed out as containing a Canaan for his overtasked spirit.

The Countess had consequently no grounds for complaint, on receiving, after his departure, the letter of adieu announcing the projects of the self-banished man. But though tender and respectful, there was a deep sadness in its tenour that sounded like the passing-bell of her son!—She saw that he was lost to her for ever—in the spirit if not in the flesh; and though she resigned herself anew to the task of endurance, it was either because her neck had become fitted to the iron yoke of affliction, or because to whatever storms the frail vessel of humanity

may be exposed, the anchor vouchsafed for its sustainment acquires proportionate strength. The patience of the poor mother was blessed with increase a thousand fold, now that she had sorrows to bear not only for herself, but for her son. She did not shed a tear when the newspaper containing news of the sailing of the Antelope fell from her hand.

The first day of composure enjoyed, meanwhile, by the noble exile, was that on which he found himself on the wide ocean, with no record around him of his cares; and for attendants, only the hardy crew to whom their young lord was endeared by former experience of his courage, kindness, and liberality. If conscious of the joy of emancipation from restraint, in his first cruise, what was now his sense of release, in redemption from the observation of society, and the thousand accusing testimonials of home!—

The sky shone brightly over his head,—the light green waves were circling around him.—There was no England for him at that moment,

—no house of peers,—no herald's office,—no clubs,—no coteries, no tinsel of fashion,—no superficial splendours. His passion for the sea, which, like the love of music, may be defined as one of the few sensual pleasures without vice, was a source of blameless consolation.

The irritation of his mind became still more subdued, as he sailed over the blue waters of the Mediterranean, associating in his mind the ecstasy of a period when he had known no sorrow, with the physical enjoyment of the passing hour. He gloried in the idea of turning his back upon the West, with all its vulgar, puny, and pretentious littleness;—and hailing those gorgeous climes, worthy to be the habitation of immortal beings, which have afforded a birthplace to all that is sacred to the minds or imaginations of mankind. Greece,—Egypt,—Palestine,—were about to renew for him the majestic impressions, through whose ennobling influence he had first learned to cast aside the trammels of boyhood.

city of antediluvian times, and the military despotism of modern Egypt. He was living in the past. Every hour of his anterior existence was becoming imprinted as by a branding iron upon his heart. The words of affection formerly addressed to him seemed inscribed in warning before his eyes, like the mystic writing on the wall. He was forbidden to love,—why not forbidden to live?—or if condemned to live, why not exonerated in mercy from the agonizing duty of retrospection?—He was at war with himself,—at war with destiny:—like Jacob, he wrestled with the Omnipotent!

But it is amid the fervour of struggles such as these, that the mind of man acquires an heroic texture; and as a fair and fertile world emerged from the confusion of chaos at the fiat of a master will, the human character issues forth reduced to order from the conflict of its restless impulses. All that was boyish, all that was trivial in Greville, disappeared amid the buffetings of his hour

adversity. The moment the real business of life begins, we fling to the winds our illusions and affectations: as the mariner, on the rising of the tempest, cuts away and flings overboard the superfluous rigging of his vessel.

Alone with that second self so often overlooked amid the turmoil of the world, (that second self, the apparition of which, like the wraiths of the misty north, or the spectral reflections of his own image rendered back to the wanderer on the Brocken, appals like an omen,) Greville recoiled with awe from the consciousness of his responsibilities.

The vastness of the scenes he was traversing,—the majesty of ages as exemplified in their monuments,—inspired him at once with contempt and reverence for the frail creatures vibrating between mortality and immortality, to whose enjoyment are conceded the beauties of earth, as if to palliate the cares of their brief probation; and in the solitude of the wilderness, he seemed

to stand alone and humbled before the Maker of mankind, like Adam in his garden, yearning to conceal his fallen nature.

Impressions such as these, tended at least to efface the petty irritations of vanity and self-love engendered amid the corruptions of social life! But while the mind of Greville became enlightened and matured by hours, weeks, months, of solitary self-communion, his constitution sank under the mingled influence of climate and despondency. From Ebsambul, where he had landed in the heat of the day, at the suggestion of his Nubian attendants, to explore the splendid rock temple of Re, discovered by Belzoni, he returned to the boat utterly exhausted. It was in vain that Abdallah, the Captain or Reis of his berbers, tendered the simple remedies of the country. The sufferer was smitten with disease, past the reach of such medicaments. Stupor seemed to have seized upon his faculties. All night, he lay insensible, under the influence of one of the pernicious fevers of the country; and at

dawn of day the Reis, alarmed at his own responsibility, and deeply interested in the fate of his gentle patron, whose danger was imminent, resolved to steer for the village of Wady Halfa, and land the unconscious sufferer.

And there, in an Ethiopian hovel, almost within view of the mountains of Dongola, remote from all trace of civilization and surrounded by the "dusky men of Ind," lay the loved of so many hearts,—about to render up his soul in a pagan country, where no spiritual rites might consecrate his sepulchre in the sand!—Even the stern Abdallah, as he watched by the couch on which the dying man had been landed from his dahabieh, could scarcely refrain from tears as he contemplated the lonely deathbed of the handsome young Frank.

Yet Greville was at that moment scarcely an object of commiseration. Round that desolate couch, were visions of joy and happiness. The delusions of fever were restoring to him the loved —the lost.—Kindly greetings were breathed in

his ears,—earnest eyes fixed their tender gaze upon his face.—Instead of the feathery palm-trees waving over that miserable roof, the stately oaks of Greville Abbey,—the blooming groves of the Tuileries—seemed to shelter his head; and the cool, green turf of Chantilly, or of his still dearer England, was under his feet, in place of the burning sands of the Nubian desert!—

It is true, these visions of peace were intermingled with fantastic shows of the gigantic halls of Carnac, where the terrific figures of Memnon and Sesostris, as he had recently beheld them in their appalling effigies, seemed to move visibly through the ghastly distance;—or frightful processions of the warlike triumphs of Rameses, attended by the clang of arms and roaring of thunder.—All that the land of Cush had supplied of heroic imagery, all that the desolation of Thebes had conjured up to bewilder his imagination, recurred by fits to his distracted brain, between the intervals of his remembered moments of tenderness and joy.

How long he lay the victim of this struggle between life and death, he knew not. His first consciousness was that of gasping back into a sense of more painful vitality; and finding pitying faces of strangers hanging over his couch. After the ideal forms that had appeared to fit beside his pillow,—the gentle countenance of Madame de Rastanges and the graceful figure of Eugénie,—it seemed as if his illusions were now beginning, when he noted the linen vests and wide trowsers cinctured round their naked ancles, of the Arab women who were mercifully sharing the ministry of his Nubian crew. But it was now also that the sufferings of Grenville really commenced. It was now that he became conscious of pain,—of peril,—of loneliness;—it was now that, on his release from danger, he breathed a fervent prayer for release from life.

It might be that narcotics were mingled with the balmier infusions supplied to him by his attendants, for spite of the intensity of a single

venerable derber, who implored them to trust rather to the virtues of a fetish which he had bound round the arm of the unconscious Greville;) for his long convalescence, when afterwards recalled to mind, resembled a prolonged dose, with brief intervals of waking weakness. The Reis, who assumed to himself the office of Hakim in that desolate place, insisted that at the first possible moment a removal to the dahabieh should secure change of air to the invalid; and scarcely had Greville begun to familiarise himself with the strange aspect of his habitation and attendants, when he found his hand pressed fervently to the eyes of the latter, in token of gratitude for the liberalities bestowed in the first moments of returning consciousness, as well as of farewell to the departing guest.

He had sanctioned the proposal of the Reis for their immediate return towards Cairo. Alarmed at the idea of a wealthy Frank dying unattended in the midst of them, the crew were eager to make the best of their way back

to the haunts of civilization: and never had poor Abdallah uttered his attestation of "God is great" with more pious fervency, than when he surrendered up his charge to the hands of his countrymen, and Greville found himself welcomed once more beneath the hospitable roof of Mr. Hill.

To trace the slow progress of convalescence were a tedious task. For weeks, for months, the restoration of the invalid was so frequently retarded by relapse, that even the Armenian physicians, at first sanguine in their promises of recovery, began to perceive that their leech-craft was circumvented by a moral influence.

"You are strong again, if you knew it,—you are healed, would you but believe it," said they, when the breaking of spring found the young Englishman still loitering in the city of minarets. "Arouse yourself!—gird up your loins. Away to the cities of the desert, and accomplish your mission!"—

In pursuance of these counsels, accordingly,

he resumed his long-purposed excursions. To return a second time from the east without having visited Baalbec, Palmyra, Jerash, or sheltered himself beneath the spicy forest of Lebanon, was impossible. But alas! the result of his exertions was a second attack of fever, in the convent on Mount Sinai; where even the skill and attention of Father Dimitri and his brotherhood scarcely availed to snatch him from the grave.

"The east is unpropitious to me as the west!"—was the reflection of the desponding man when, after eight months' absence, he returned to Alexandria; and heartily did he rejoice to find himself once more on the deck of the Antelope, which had been laid up at Malta throughout the winter, preparatory to a cruise in the Archipelago. Still, his departure was delayed. The exertions required of him at a magnificent fête, given on board a crack English frigate in the harbour of Alexandria, to the young Prince de J——, whose vessel was also lying at

anchor, again disabled him for a time, and retarded his departure.

During his illness, the young Prince, whom he had last encountered under auspices so different, watching the weighing of his royal brother's jockeys in the racing stables at Chantilly, was a frequent visitor to his sick-room at Beverley's Hotel. There was between them the sympathy of generous intrepidity and liberal views; and the Prince took delight in reverting, with the noble English traveller, to those peculiar attractions of climate and character which invest his native land with the privileges of a favourite, and render Paris *l'enfant gâté de l'univers.*

Late in the month of June, Greville was at length enabled to take his stand on the deck of the Antelope, and refresh himself with the breezes of a marine atmosphere. It was not, however, without deep regret that he bad adieu to the lands which, though they had conveyed the same injury to his constitution that his spirits had previously sustained from moral causes,

were endeared by a thousand soothing associations.

"I visited the east for the cultivation of my egotism!" Greville one day observed, in reply to the friendly questioning of the Prince de J——. "The physical lethargy resulting from tropical climates is said to afford the surest relief to mental excitement. Had my health permitted, I might perhaps have taken to the desart in good earnest; and passed the remainder of my days under a date-tree, my pipe stationary in my mouth, and my mind in the clouds!"—

There was, however, no semblance of selfishness in the deep emotion with which, previous to his embarkation, he received the adieux of Abdallah. Greville had become sincerely attached to the undemonstrative being who exhibited his fidelity in unremitting, but silent service. His attendance resembled indeed that of one of the genii of his own Africa, obedient to the touch of

a talisman, rather than the noisy officiousness of a European menial.

But this wild ministry, combined with the influences of a country so mysteriously endowed with the majesty of the past, was beginning to tinge with mysticism the morbid reveries of the invalid. His energies were becoming palsied. His mind was imbibing a tone of fatalism.

It was perhaps well for Greville that he was sentenced to bid a timely adieu to the east:—his spirits being in no condition to grapple with the impressions of that land of prodigies, wherein, as from the grave of a giant, a gigantic spectre seems to be arising!—

CHAPTER II.

He loved all waste
And solitary places, where we taste
The pleasure of believing what we see
Is boundless—as we wish our souls to be.
P. B. SHELLEY.

THE ensuing months were months of healthfulness and peace. A seaman's wholesome life exercised its usual happy influence on his constitution; and the frame, relaxed by the enervating influence of the burning suns and scorching siroc of Africa, and still more by the oppression of profound despondency, gradually rallied under the excitement of stirring breezes and incessant change of scene.

> The isles of Greece,
> Where burning Sappho loved and sang,

were almost as fair and enthralling to him as of old; nor was it till the autumn, that a severe attack of illness at Napoli di Romagna, consequent upon imprudent exposure to the air of the marshes, reminded him of the strenuous advice of his Armenian physicians, that he should spend the ensuing winter in the south of France. Hyères had been especially pointed out to him; in preference to Nice, where throngs of English are beginning to desecrate the resort of disease and death, with all the frivolities of a bathing-place.

His first destination, however, was Marseilles: a disastrous movement!—for on the very evening of the day on which the Antelope dropped anchor in the harbour, the crew, though usually remarkable for the excellence of their subordination, indulged in a deep carouse with the strong potables of France, ending, like other carouses stimulated by ardent spirits, in a desperate affray.

Unluckily, a Corsican sailor of the name of

Anton' Amazzi, to whom Lord Greville, to the dissatisfaction of his men, had given a passage from Corinth, was tempted to draw his stiletto in self-defence: still more unluckily, in wresting the weapon from his hands, the English mate of the Antelope received a mortal wound!—Within four and twenty hours of his landing, Lord Greville was forced to surrender one of his crew into the hands of justice!—

To consign the body of his brave shipmate to the dust of a foreign country, was a painful duty;—but far more painful was it to watch the slow proceedings of the *Cour d'assises*, while the surviving offender lay in irons, in peril of mortal retribution, or at least of condemnation for life to the galleys. However closely the sympathies of Greville might be enlisted in the fate of his deceased countryman, he thought it cruel and unjust that Amazzi should be sacrificed to a prejudice against the sanguinary propensities of Corsican vindictiveness. It was understood, moreover, that government was desi-

nous of affording, on this occasion, a signal example towards the reinforcement and maintenance of public order, in one of the most unquiet of the southern ports of France.

The frank bearing of the prisoner, and his high courage, interested the feelings of Lord Greville, already strongly influenced by his knowledge of the extenuating facts of the case. He had secured the best advocates to defend the cause of Amazzi; but it was hinted by the advocates he had retained, that the requisition signed by the crew of the Antelope in favour of the prisoner, ought to be submitted to the authorities by the hands of the representative of the British government; and that by a proper appeal, the cause might even be removed for hearing into a more auspicious court than the local tribunals.

By the excitement attendant on such a crisis, the nerves of Greville, already enfeebled, were thoroughly disordered. Wherever he directed his wanderings, disaster seemed to overtake him!

Perhaps but for the duty imposed upon him, his depression might have assumed a still more alarming character. But the destiny of a human being was dependent upon his exertions; and flinging aside the habits of indolence he had contracted in his oriental seclusion, he hastened to Paris.

Bitter as it was to him to re-enter its forbidden walls, the call upon his humanity was too peremptory to admit of receding from the trial; moreover the city was wide enough to contain a being so insignificant, and those whose society it was decreed that he must avoid. Nay, Paris is perhaps of all earthly spots the one where persons desirous of remaining apart, are least peremptorily thrust into each other's presence.

So striking too was the alteration in his person, that he had every chance of escaping without recognition, if accidentally placed in collision with his former associates. His movements had lost their elasticity,— his countenance the brilliancy of youth. Care had saddened the

expression of his earnest eyes; and there was nothing now of the buoyant sensitive being whose slightest emotion used to render the mantling blood perceptible even through the roots of his waving hair. The grave but listless traveller domiciled in the Rue de Lille, was at least ten years older than the gay idler of the preceding year,—the once joyous, once radiant Earl of Greville!—

With the delusion common to hypochondriacs, he fancied that part at least of the change of which he was conscious, must reside in external objects.

"Can this be the Faubourg?"—was his involuntary exclamation, when glancing from the windows of his sitting-room towards the magnificent structure of the Hotel de Commerce, the finest of the modern elevations of Paris, through the misty atmosphere inevitable on an autumnal evening in the immediate neighbourhood of the river.—"Can this dull cheerless city be the same enchanting spot, the memory of which has

so often embellished my day-dreams, under the brightness of an oriental sky?"

And partly from moral, partly from physical disorder, he shuddered audibly as he took refuge by the fireside from view of the foggy street.

There was nothing in his solitary meal calculated to cheer his spirits.—Fred Massingberd would have murmured against the mediocrity of the cooking;—Greville perceived only that he was alone,—how miserably alone!—more lonely far, than amid the solitude of the mighty desert, wherein his soul was elevated to communion far beyond the companionship of mortal nature.

Next day, in one of those pouring rains which look like an act of especial vengeance of the skies, he proceeded to seek audiences in the quarters essential for the despatch of his business. To inscribe his name with a request for an appointment, was the utmost he could accomplish; and his anxiety to avoid all encounter

with his acquaintances in Paris, combined with the state of the weather, soon drove him back to his cheerless home;—a home without books, —without kindred associations,—without anything to render him insensible to the skiey influences of a northern climate on a rainy day.

The humid atmosphere seemed to enfold him like a sheet of lead. After the dry warmth of the east, he was ill-prepared for the chilly moisture of the banks of the Seine. London would probably have put an end to him at once; for even Paris appeared insupportable. He longed for the *bien être* of his preceding winter at Cairo; when, under the eves of his house, he sat sunning himself, his pipe in his mouth, letting pass the drowsy hours, in a reverie secured by physical beatitude from every gloomy reminiscence.

"This will never do!"—cried Greville, after having examined for the fourth time, with disgust, the landscapes adorning two china vases on his chimneypiece, the wiggy foliage of whose

woods seemed intended to match with the distorted imitations of roses and pansies contained in the vases. "Another such a day, and my nerves will be unstrung past recovery!"—

He even betook himself for relief to the occupation so dear to the French valetudinarian,—*de tisonner le feu*;—when the adroit *laquais de place* stationed in his anteroom, on hearing his duties infringed upon by the movement of logs and tongs, glided in with the usual inquiry of "*Monsieur permet-il que je renouvelle le feu?*"

Monsieur chose, however, to arrange it himself; whereupon François, finding his occupation gone, saw fit to remain in the room, offering his opinion where he was not allowed to offer his assistance. Monsieur, he admitted, arranged a wood fire almost as well as a Frenchman; still *il fallait être né Parisien* to understand exactly the quantity of ashes indispensable to the superstructure, and the precise point where the glowing *braise* was to be encrusted on the pile of *bûches*.

Finding that his new master uttered not a word of remonstrance, François officiously tendered his services to procure some new work from the nearest *cabinet de lecture*—"*pour désennuyer Monsieur par le mauvais temps qu'il faisait,*" furthermore suggesting that, if Monsieur purposed attending one of the theatres, it might not be amiss to secure a box or stall, according to Monsieur's good pleasure.

It was Monsieur's good pleasure to remain at home; but he expressed his intentions in a tone so listless, that the *laquais de place* fancied persuasion only was wanting, to induce him into the usual routine of pleasures chalked out for the stranger in Paris. It accorded, in fact, very ill with the perquisite tariff of a *domestique de place*, that the traveller should limit his enjoyments to the arrangement of his fire.

"Monsieur is perhaps unaware that Mademoiselle Rachel plays to-night, in one of her best parts!" persisted the insinuating François.

"Monsieur might perhaps secure a *baignoire* even at this hour—"

He was proceeding fluently, when Greville, by way of getting rid of his importunity, bad him proceed to the *cabinet de lecture*, according to his first proposal; and before the invalid had time wholly to demolish the structure of his fire and reconstruct it on an improved principle, the *laquais de place*, with the despatch which forms the badge of all his tribe, went,—returned, —and laid before him two volumes, whose spotless yellow covers announced the last new novel.

In a moment, ere Greville could express a wish or a remonstrance, his *fauteuil à la Voltaire* was rolled to the fireside,—the folding screen placed round it for the exclusion of draughts, and the books placed side by side upon a *guéridon* near the chair. Nothing could look more tempting to an idle man, under the influence of a November rain; even though unprepared for the pleasure awaiting him in the perusal of the powerful and impassioned tale of "Gerfaut." —

"And now, Monsieur perhaps permits me to go in search of a *baignoire* at the Français?" demanded the *laquais de place*, still fidgeting round the arm-chair into which Greville had thrown himself. To get rid of his attendance, Monsieur replied by a nod in the affirmative; feeling that having a box at his disposal did not inevitably entail upon him a visit to the theatre.

Without a hope, almost without a desire to entertain himself, did Greville, as soon as the officious slave had quitted the room, lift with a sigh of lassitude a volume from the *guéridon*, and cast his eyes languidly over the opening pages.

If the unhappy concocters of literary fiction permitted themselves to reflect upon the difficulty of detaching the imaginations of their multifarious readers from the romance of their several lives, to rivet them to the narrative of joys and sorrows purely imaginative, they would probably resign their task in despair. Yet who that ever scrutinized the operations of the human

mind, would not rather address a tale of passion to a soul agitated by impulses of passion, than to the listless egotists who, from the monotonous level of their own insignificance, contemplate even fictitious emotion with the same stupid wonder that a child gazes upon the movements of some complicated machine.

Charles de Bernard might, perhaps, have snatched his impassioned volumes from the hands of Greville, whose eyes wandered mechanically over the first vivid pages of "Gerfaut;" but the author's self-love would have been fully gratified could he have noted, three hours afterwards, the eagerness with which his courteous reader sat absorbed in the relation of events in which he had no more share than in the loves of the angels. The key-note of his feelings was touched; a new chord vibrated to the master-hand. The spell by which he had been transfixed within the circle of his own afflictions, was broken; and, like the waves of a frozen river, suddenly restored to the fulfilment of their great

purpose in creation, his thoughts flowed on, loosed from their bitter bondage.

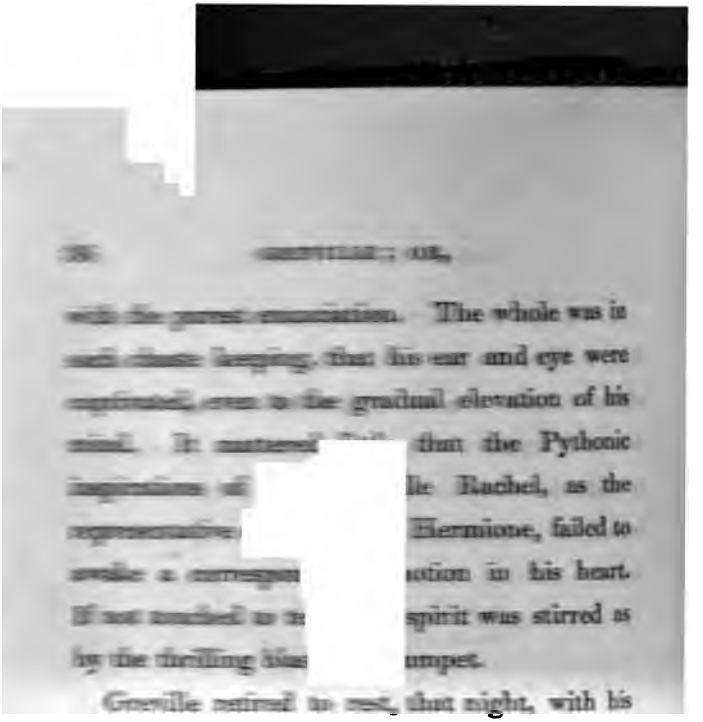
The consciousness of release from mental thraldom, constitutes in itself a happiness for persons so susceptible as Greville. That day, he did not notice the solitariness of his dinner table. A bottle of excellent Lafitte, placed a moment upon the stove of the anteroom, to draw forth the bouquet, completed the charm; and when the zealous François announced that "*la voiture de Monsieur était avancée*" to convey him to the theatre, instead of resisting as he had predetermined, he allowed himself to be transferred to the Théatre Français.

The aspect of so many cheerful and intelligent human beings, assembled for the same purpose as his own,—to emancipate themselves, namely, from the commonplace of life by participation in one of its more impassioned episodes,—inspired him with a sense of fellowship. After dwelling so long among tribes uncongenial as if of another species, and un-

demonstrative as statues, he found himself suddenly transported to the midst of an intellectual brotherhood, endowed with sympathies correspondent to his own.

The play began. How often had he attended dramatic representations, how often visited that very theatre, in company with those whose presence sufficed to detach his mind from all interest in what was passing on the stage! But now, isolated and alone, he came prepared to see, to hear, to feel; or rather, prepared for indifference,—he saw, heard, felt, ere aware that his attention was demanded.

The play was Andromaque. As a reader, he detested the measured pomposity of the courtly Racine; nor was there much in the sorrows of Hector's widow, conveying an intimate appeal to his sensibilities. But as scene succeeded scene, he became conscious of the charm of beholding human nature portrayed on an ennobled scale; and found his heart respond to lofty and generous sentiments, conveyed in elegant language



mind unburthened of a portion of its heaviness. He had been feeling *with* others *for* others. His reasoning faculties had been exercised on something beyond his peculiar distresses. Amid the impulses of life and intelligence quickening around him, he had become conscious of his own insignificance. As in the wilderness his littleness had sunk rebuked by the majesty of nature, his egotism was now crushed by the grandeur of the civilized mass,—a mass to whose sympathies he was no more than an atom of dust.

It seemed the highest presumption to magnify to himself the cares of a being so unessential to the march of human events. And thus enfranchised from his moral nightmare, he slept the sleep of one whose sensibilities had ceased to be benumbed by a dominant impression.

A wiser and a better man
He woke the morrow morn !—



GRENVILLE; OR,

III.

The man who feels a tendency to shrink from collision with his fellows, to run away with distaste or apprehension from the great practical business of life, does not enjoy complete moral or intellectual health,—will quickly contract a silly conceit and fastidiousness, or sink into imbecility and misanthropy. He should devoutly thank Providence for the occasion, however startling and irritating, which stirs him out of his lethargy—his cowardly lethargy,—and sends him among his fellows.

WRITER IN BLACKWOOD.

No one ever abided long among the French, without finding his intelligence stimulated by the vivacity of their impressions, and a certain inherent power of imparting them to other people. Their writers,—their talkers,—

their actors,—their public men,—their private,—are more prompt in the faculty of conveying new and startling ideas; and though the reasoning powers of the English and Germans are probably of a higher order, the machinery of their minds is so much more cumbrous, that while arranging their forces in order of battle, the French have already won the field.

The very countenances of the Parisians, though exhibiting rare traces of physical beauty, are instinct with character, intelligence, and mutability. Greville was forcibly struck by this in surveying the assemblage of faces in the pit of the Théatre Français. Their very mode of listening and applauding, reminded him that he was in the heart of a highly-civilized metropolis. But it was not alone at the theatre. Wherever he directed his steps, his attention was kept alive by the vivid intelligence of the educated orders, and the exhilarating gaiety of the people.

"They were right who decided Paris to be a

spot eminently auspicious to the relaxation of the mind!" said he, when at the close of a week he found that, though his business was expedited, he was still an inmate of the Hotel Voltaire, without any immediate project of departure. "Since I arrived here, I have become a different being. After all, there is truth in the adage that '*Paris est le lieu du monde où l'on peut le mieux se passer le bonheur.*'"

Had any one presumed to whisper to him that his smiling adroit *laquais de place* had usurped the privilege formerly arrogated by Fred Massingberd, of marshalling him from place to place, and instructing him in what he should eat, what he should drink, or what he should put on, Greville would perhaps have resented the imputation. But so it was. Either his philosophy was become so epicurean as to find enjoyment in non-resistance, or abstraction of mind rendered him as ready a tool as formerly timidity and indolence; for he was almost grateful to the shrewd but good-humoured

François, who took so much trouble off his hands.

The admirable breakfast smoking on the table at precisely the right moment, with the *feuilletons* of the day lying open beside the *pâté de foie gras*, or *hure de Troyes;* — the *recherché* little dinner, prepared in a warm and well-lighted *cabinet particulier* of the best *restaurant* in the neighbourhood of the theatre he had pointed out at breakfast for his evening's recreation;—his lorgnette and a copy of the entr'acte, presented on the threshold of his *loge d'avant-scène;* — his *sorbet*, or iced orgeat, awaiting him on his return home;—a constant supply of new books, engravings, and caricatures, seemed, day after day, to anticipate his whims and wishes. For François, having discovered that his new proprietor was rich and generous, was of opinion that wealth and liberality entitled him to be *désennuyé* by all the means at the disposal of that harlequin of social life, a Parisian *laquais de place!*—

On the nights when the *Académie Royale* was about to develope its legions of sylphs or squadrons of kettle-drums, a petit *souper*, enhanced by all the *primeurs* in season because out of season, awaited him at the *Café de Paris*. For the *Gymnase*, *Variétés* or *Vaudeville*, a *dîner de fantaisie* at the Café Anglais or Lemardelay prepared the way;—for the wild melodramas of Porte St. Martin, the substantial buffet of the *Cadran Bleu*.—When a box was engaged for him at the brilliant little theatres of the Opera Comique, or Salle Ventadour, he usually found his carriage drive up to that renowned temple of gastronomy the Rocher de Cancale, (whose fish courses so far eclipse those of Lovegrove;) while the Théatre Français was preceded by the excellent *cuisine* of Véry, or the exquisite cellar of the *Frères Provençaux*.—The Café de Périgord or Grand Vatel served up their appetizing *petits plats* previous to the equally piquant *petites pièces* of the Théatre du Palais Royal.—

It was only on the nights sacred to the Italian Opera, that François allowed Monsieur to follow his own devices and dine at home; either because his *laquais de place* was sufficiently *du bon ton* to conceive that more than ordinary *recueillement* was indispensable for the enjoyment of Grisi's and Rubini's enchanting cadences; or on account of the greater refinement of toilet indispensable to the spot. But it was rare indeed that Greville proposed a visit *aux Italiens*. Dreading the chances of recognition to which he was exposed in so fashionable an audience, he preferred the lively representations of the minor French theatres, as imposing less restraint on his attention. The enthralling interest excited by such artists as Bouffé and Ferville, Madame Volnys, or Madame Albert, experienced an agreeable relief from the witty audacity of Dejazet, the drolleries of Numa, or the dramatic tact of Frédéric Lemaitre; while the sparkling gaiety of Scribe or Bayard seemed to acquire a new charm, after

the excitement produced by the impressive dramas of Hugo and Alexandre Dumas.

Every night, in short, he visited some theatre, down to the grotesque pantomimes of Debureau and the sprightly epigrams in action of the Parisian;—or rather, every night, *il se laissait* conquester to the theatre that promised best for his amusement, or that François promised loudest should amuse him. It was as easy to enjoy his reveries reclining in his private box, as in his chimney-corner; and those reveries assumed a less lugubrious complexion when indulged amid a multitude of cheerful faces, than in a lonely chamber, whose very stillness inspires compunction. Ever in crowds, yet ever alone, the pre-occupation of his mind prevented him from becoming conscious of that isolation "amid the hum, the stir, the shock of men," so powerfully described by Byron, and so strongly felt by all the world.

With strange good fortune, he escaped accidental collision with his Parisian acquaintances

during a whole month's enjoyment of the amusements assigned to him by the provident François. Though Christmas was at hand, his Faubourg friends were still settled at their country seats, absorbed in the pleasures of the chase. He had noted that his favourite hotels in the Rue St. Dominique and Rue de Varennes remained closed; and it was a relief to know their inmates still at a distance, for though he never went out on foot, (the streets of the Faubourg being untraversable in winter, unless as a matter of necessity,) he felt that to encounter them would be too great a trial for the infirm state of his health and spirits.

To the family of Rostanges, more particularly, his explanations must be of a nature he scarcely dared contemplate. To that letter,—that touching letter, addressed to him by Sophie,—he had never deigned an answer!—It was impossible to write without sinning against candour; and he preferred leaving Madame de Rostanges to the supposition that her letter had miscarried. In

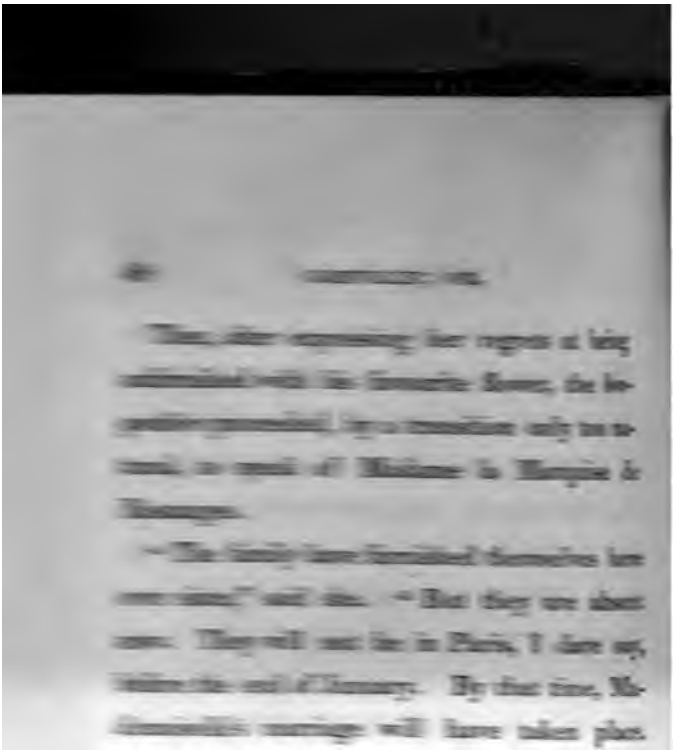
the event of her having made subsequent inquiries, she must have learned his voyage to the east; and was probably satisfied that the communication so nearly regarding his happiness and that of her sister, had never reached his hands. What was the result?—He knew not,—he scarcely dared conjecture!—Since it was decreed that he must never become the husband of Eugénie, better that her very existence should be unknown to him,—that her name should never more be pronounced in his presence,—that her image should be uprooted from his heart!—

But it is because nature revolts against such outrages upon her decrees, that Greville's life had nearly fallen a sacrifice to the effort. From the moment he had resolved to banish Eugénie de Nangis from his recollection, the extent of her power over his feelings had become only too cruelly demonstrated. The touchstone once applied, he found that she was inextricably intermingled with his hopes of happiness. Still,

though his health had sunk under the trial, he adhered to his resolution, and had attempted no further intercourse with the family. During his sojourn in the east, indeed, such forbearance was not difficult; but now that he was once more in France,—once more in Paris,—it required some self-command to refrain from all inquiry concerning the family.

On one occasion, however, immediately after his arrival, gratuitous information had been afforded him. As he passed one morning the *Magazin* of Madame Adde, he almost involuntarily pulled the check-string, and inquired for a gardenia. A demand so unusual at that season of the year, brought *la mère des lions* to the carriage to make her excuses in person.

"Ah! I thought it must be one of my old customers!"—cried she, instantly recognising him. "I am scarcely ever asked for a gardenia, milor, without recollecting the time (two years ago, I think?) when you used to buy them of me *à poids d'or!*"



[illegible] arrangement [illegible]

[illegible] after expressing her regret at being unacquainted with the Countess Dowry, the [illegible] proceeded, by a transition only to be [illegible] a speech of Madame de Marigny to Madame de Beauvais.

"The family have furnished themselves here very nicely," said she. "But they are about soon. They will not be in Paris, I dare say, before the end of January. By that time, Mademoiselle's marriage will have taken place.

[illegible] arrangements are already [illegible]. You must remember the [illegible] —a great event,—the Count [illegible] at Nevers,—is there nothing besides [illegible] which I can have the honour of serving [illegible] morning?"—A double [illegible] immediately answered to it."

A [illegible] committee was accordingly appointed, in consequence of the curiosity of the courteous Madame Adam:—and Grenville returned home that day so much more dispirited than usual, that it required the heart of François

to recollect that a new ballet was to be performed at the opera, with the piquant Elssler for its heroine. It was in vain that his master protested against going, and complained of indisposition.

"*Monsieur verra bien que cette petite distraction va dissiper sa migraine!*" persisted the *laquais de place;* and Greville felt that it would be less troublesome to ensconce himself in the seclusion of his quiet *baignoire* than be exposed all the evening to the *tisannes de tilleul ou de violette,* and other small potables with which François would be sure to inundate his headache.

Though annoyed by the accuracy with which his changes of health and humour were noted by this assiduous slave, it was impossible not to be grateful for the zeal with which, whenever he seemed depressed, as in the present instance, some rare dish or choice wine was placed before him at dinner, to coax him into better sorts. Greville was perhaps, of all men living, the least susceptible to the plea-

sures of the table. Still, he ascended the steps in the Rue Lepelletier that night with all the better grace, for the few glasses of admirable Clos de Vougeot and the cup of clear and scalding coffee, in which François had taken care to steep the cares of his noble master. He was even pleased with the anticipation of three hours of complete seclusion, with a brilliant pageant passing before his eyes.

Just, however, as he was extending his hand to receive, at the foot of the stairs, the printed program of the new ballet, he found it unceremoniously seized and cordially shaken; and lo! turning round in utter discomposure at the interruption, found himself addressed by the young and handsome Prince de J——, the sailor son of the King.

In a moment, the instinctive high breeding of Greville, like the sun bursting through a mist, dispelled the clouds from his countenance, while replying to the friendly inquiries of the warm-hearted young prince, with whom at

Alexandria he had formed a somewhat close intimacy. Luckily, no apologies were needful for having failed to make known to his Royal Highness his sojourn in Paris, the Prince himself having only arrived the preceding day from his duties on a foreign station.

"I am overwhelmed with business on my return home after so long an absence," said he, with another parting shake of the hand; "but as soon as I can disengage myself, my dear Lord Greville, we must meet, to talk over our pleasures of the East.—*A revoir.*"

Lord Greville shrugged his shoulders with vexation as he proceeded along the corridor to his snug box next the *avant scènes*. His first notion was to quit Paris the following day; his next, to congratulate himself on the improbability that, amid the anxieties of his public career and the pleasures of rejoining his family, the Prince should so much as recall to mind their chance encounter. His terror of being dragged into notice through the condescensions

of royalty consequently interfered little with his delight in the brilliant piquancy of the charming Elssler, or the striking tableaux of which she formed the centre.

It is in vain we protest against the unintellectuality of dancing as a source of enjoyment! There is probably no dramatic representation which carries away the audience like a good ballet, — the highest effort of the genius of materialism. — It imposes no tax on the attention, — it awakens no unpleasant associations, — it is a spectacle for which experience suggests no antecedents. When once the imagination is taken prisoner by the brilliant phantasm, we luxuriate in the gratification afforded to our eyes, as we enjoy the transient brightness of a dream , the meridian of a day *sans veille ni lendemain.* Dull indeed must be the spectator who can view without interest such chef-d'œuvres as "Faust," or "Massniello." Even the Americans were exalted above their matter-of-fact nature by the graces

of Elssler;—even Lord Greville returned that night to his hotel haunted by bright visions of grace and beauty, and murmuring the sprightly measure of the Cracovienne.

On the morrow, the carriage was announced to him immediately after breakfast; and from the air with which the *laquais de place* held out his hat and gloves, he saw that it was intended he should go out.

"Milor probably forgets," suggested François, who, from the adventure of the preceding night had obtained an insight into the rank of his master, and from the regard testified towards him by a prince of the blood, perhaps some little accession of personal respect, — "Milor probably forgets that it was for this day I obtained him a ticket of admission to the Hotel du Archives?"—

And Greville, who had simply authorized the measure to get rid of the subject, now confirmed his act of submission by suffering himself to be driven through the filthiest part of the ancient

age of Paris, through streets scarcely capable of admitting a carriage, towards a neighbourhood [illegible] terra incognita to the fashionable world as the narrowest lane of Lothbury to the entrance of May Fair.

[illegible] in the heart of this unenviable quarter, however, that he espied the peaked roof of a palace (erected by the Connetable de Clisson, on the model of his famous ancestral château,) attached to the more modern Hotel de Soubise, which, only a century ago, formed the centre of attraction to the fashionables of Paris, as the successive residence of the powerful families of Guise and Rohan;—of which the latter took for its motto the haughty device—"*Roi ne peux,—Prince ne daigne,—Rohan je suis!*"—and the former, the still more audacious task of the subjugation of kings!

Like our own Montagu House, the ill-situated palace is now appropriately converted into a national museum, as a depository for the archives of France.

"No wonder that so princely a mansion should have become the property of government!" mused Lord Greville, as he ascended the damp but splendid staircase. "The race of *grand seigneurs*, such as the Princes de Soubise and Guemenée, was extinguished by the Code Napoleon; and the capital, relieved from the demoralizing influence of their excesses, must content itself to resign the spectacle of their domestic magnificence."

It was in vain that François stepped forward with his cut-and-dry *laquais-de-place* exposition of the importance of the institution,—another of the national bequests of the imperial reparator of royal oversights. Greville was of an age to experience stronger interest in those deserted galleries and echoing chambers, than in the green *cartons* containing the confiscated papers of Fieschi, Mallet, and other defeated conspirators against the successive governments of France. Even the insignia of those more comprehensive conspiracies, yclept Treaties of

Peace and Commerce,—(though enriched with the signets and signatures of the sovereigns of all times and countries, from le bon roi Dagobert, down to Maria de Gloria, and including the seven dangling seals of the Helvetic provinces and one authoritative signet of Great Britain;)—even the autographs of Suger and Sully,—the bad spelling of *le bon Henri*, and the mean policy of Louis le Grand,—even the charters granted by Childebert and Clovis to royal abbeys destined to be survived by these fragile records of their privileges and immunities,—interested him less than the fatal window whence St. Mégrin, the victim of a chivalric gallantry, precipitated himself into the street from the boudoir of Catherine of Cleves, on the approach of her stern husband, Henri de Guise.

The *loquais de place*, enchanted to perceive from the countenance of Greville (by the study of which he realized so many hundred francs per month,) that Milor was interested by the scene he was surveying, recommenced his professional

routine by explaining that the museum contained eighty thousand cases of the archives of France, carefully classed and numbered. Milor seemed to attach less value to these dry materials of history, than to the truly incongruous catacombs in which the reliques are interred;—galleries, whose flooring bears traces of the metallic arabesques once adorning their parquets of buhl;—doorways, lavishly adorned by the graceful pencil of Boucher with legions of those ever-smiling Cupids, of which the Love-loving artist has bequeathed so prolific a family to France.

To turn from these smiling faces to the iron chest of the national assembly, with its heterogeneous treasure of golden bulls,—keys of the Bastille,—the plate of the assignats,—the autograph will of Louis XIV., and the autograph letter from Napoleon to Louis XVIII.,—appeared to Greville a bitter irony upon the futility of sublunary things and sublunary kings.

In the circular saloon forming a centre to the radius of the *appartement d'honneur*, he almost

appeared to behold the belles of the court of Louis XV., in hoop and powder, feathers and brocade, advance to welcome the descendant of le beau Grévil, the idol of their spangled carnival, for the Hotel de Soubise,—appropriated during the earlier years of the government of Napoleon as an asylum for noble families returning from emigration, ruined by the revolution,—exists almost in its primitive state; as when the resort of all that was gay and dissolute in the court of that gayest and most dissolute of French kings,—celui *qui a inventé la poudre.*

Something, however, in the atmosphere or aspect of the desolate place, struck a chill to the heart of Greville. On all sides, instead of tripping courtiers and lovely women,—papers!—dusty, mouldering chronicles of feats forgotten and individuals commingled with the dust,—on all sides, nothing but the past:—the feuds and fights, peculations and policies of twelve centuries, enclosed in a beggarly account of pasteboard boxes;—the collective wisdom of all the

Talleyrands of Europe shrunk within a few shrivelled parchments!—Right glad was he to escape from the heavy atmosphere of the uninhabited chambers to the gardens of the hotel, cheered by the open light of day!—

Fain would François have beguiled him into a survey of another of the lions of that remote quarter; a mansion, affording the type of the residence of a *président* of the fifteenth century, and rich in historical associations as the spot where Voltaire planned his Henriade, and Napoleon, after his flight from Waterloo, learned from the lips of Count Montalivet his decree of downfall,—the Hotel de Lambert, in the Isle St. Louis. Though now degraded into a military storehouse, the gallery, painted by Lebrun, exhibits, in its rich cornices and brackets, and the fine designs of its ceiling, models for the modern decorator; while the view of the river commanded by its balconies, has been renowned as unique in Paris, from the days of Tallemant des Réaux to those

at Dalkeith. Yet in spite of the elaborate panegyric of poor François upon its beautiful staircase, and scroll work of pierced granite, which he protested had afforded a Jacob's ladder to the angelic maids of honour of the Reine Blanche, Greville resisted.

"Home!"—was his imperative order as he re-entered the carriage;—dictated, however, by some luckless presentiment; for on entering the Rue de Bellechasse, he found it stop suddenly, while a friendly, though unfamiliar voice accosted him by name.

"I have just been to visit you at your hotel," cried the Prince de J——, bringing his cabriolet up with Greville's remise. "Remember I shall be at home at twelve to-morrow, and enchanted to receive you."

To turn a deaf ear to such an invitation was impossible. On the morrow, he breakfasted with the young Prince, in his *appartement de garçon*, at the Tuileries, with a few young men of his own age,—professional or college

friends,—and one or two of graver years, attached to his household. Greville recalled to mind with pleasure the warm praises he had heard, even among the bitterest of his Carlist friends, of the family of Louis Philippe; and was gratified to find himself welcomed with cordial, though high-bred courtesy, by the royal sailor who had evinced such generous interest in his precarious condition at Alexandria.

A presentation at court was now inevitable; and a kind and friendly reception as inevitable as the presentation. The name and connexions of the Earl of Greville were familiarly known to a king who seems to possess the all but universal knowledge indispensable to a crowned head; and an invitation to dine at the Tuileries introduced him, a few days afterwards, into the bosom of a family, which, even in private life, would be signalized by its worth, accomplishments, and personal distinctions.

It was fortunate for Greville that, when

questioned by the king concerning his former visit to Paris, the residence of the court at Neuilly at that season of the year afforded a pretext for not having sought a presentation from his ambassador. He had less excuse when, in replying to his Majesty's gracious interrogations, he was obliged to avow his ignorance of the public monuments and institutions of Paris.

"Joinville must conduct you over the Egyptian and Naval Museum at the Louvre," said the King, with the affability which becomes kindness when testified towards a young man by a sovereign advanced in years;—and while proceeding to enlarge upon the recent acquisitions of these national depositories, Greville could not fail to be impressed by the extent of information, as well as by the lucidity of mind, imparting sterling value to the conversation of one superadding to the careful education attending the first subject in the realm, the varied experience attending the first throne of the Continent.

Amid the society assembled at the royal table, he had an opportunity of nearly approaching certain of the leading politicians of France, whom hitherto he had beheld only in the throng of diplomatic soirées, where it was more incumbent to exhibit their orders and *cravats*, than make proof of their intellects or opinions. He now learned to appreciate the fluent aptitude of Thiers, the classical elegance of Mignet, the universality of Passy, the bland perspicacity of the Duc Decazes.

His previous opinion of several of these eminent men had been prejudiced by the virulence of party journalism, attacking, as untrue to their early principles, those whose conduct in public life was influenced rather by love of their country than attachment to the throne; while of others, his judgment was grounded upon their published works,— manifestos of principle or standards of capacity which a statesman is pretty sure to repent having placed in the hands of an envious world. He now heard them en-

gaged in brilliant but unaffected conversation, excited rather than dominated by the presence of the master-spirit.

The military illustrations of the era were also assembled in the royal circle. Among them, Soult, even in the decadence of old age a pillar of strength to the new dynasty; though his groundless popularity in a foreign country has proved so equally groundless an injury in his own. In addition to these military and political illustrations of the day, many names of the highest aristocracy, the Chabots, La Tour du Pins, La Tremouilles, St. Aldégondes, St. Aulaires, Castellanes,—were successively announced in the presence chamber of the King.—

The tone of the Court, which he had heard so absurdly contemned by the coterie of the Hotel de St. Pierre, struck him as more than unexceptionable. An air of majesty, tempered by the influence of every womanly excellence, enchanted him in the queen, as enhancing the more guarded, though scarcely less gracious,

courtesies of her daughters-in-law;—while the countenance of the Princess Clémentine, so characteristic of her Bourbon origin as to recall the memorable profile of the gentle and unfortunate Madame Elisabeth, completed the charm arising from his previous acquaintance with the three elder princes,—by admission of all parties, the most accomplished gentlemen in France. The royal circle, one of the least constrained, because one of the most enlightened of royal circles, might be cited as a model for the purlieus of the courts of kings.

One member of the royal family, however,—"the crowning rose of the whole wreath,"—had been snatched away a year previous to the introduction of Greville into its circle. From the Prince de J—— he had learned to estimate the excellence of the gifted Marie; but it was now, in a spot sacred to her memory, that he obtained a just estimation of her talents. The chef-d'œuvre, so unostentatiously occupying a subordinate place in the gallery at Versailles,

the most imaginative of all creations of modern sculpture, scarcely struck him so much as two designs, disfigured by the faults, but marked with the genius of a first inspiration; representing the Pilgrim of Schiller, and an Angel weeping at the gates of Paradise. A yet bolder flight of imagination, developed in an equestrian figure of Jeanne d'Arc surveying, with feelings of mingled compunction and heroism, the body of the first human being slain by her hand, struck him almost with awe, as contrasted with a portrait of the young Princess adorning the chamber;—a portrait in which, disarrayed of the pomps of royalty and attired in the simple blouse of an artist, she is represented by the pencil of her master, Scheffer, with the holy tenderness due to the noblest of the children of art!—

"Let who will be invested with the unquiet sovereignty of the French nation," thought Greville, as from the sanctuary wherein he had been admitted to a view of these mournful me-

mentos of early genius, he emerged into the brilliant saloon where the King, surrounded by his fine family, was engaged in earnest conversation with a knot of the master-spirits of his realm,—"it is something to be the father of such children!"—

"Milor will doubtless pay his respects to their Majesties on New Year's Day?—*D'abord c'est indispensable!*"—observed François to the lord and master whom he governed, on the day succeeding the royal dinner party. "Every individual in Paris admitted to the honours of the Court, appears at the Tuileries on the *jour de l'an.* The first night's reception is assigned to the official bodies and corps diplomatique;—on the second, the King and Queen are approachable for general visits and presentations."

That such an effort was inevitable, Greville had already ascertained at the Embassy; where he had presented himself immediately on his arrival, and received all the aid and encourage-

ment in the Amanni business, compatible with the ends of public justice.

But if he repaired thither in the first instance for the furtherance of selfish objects, he returned for the enjoyment of congenial society, the moment improved health and spirits quickened the icy current of his blood. The dread of encountering his Carlist friends in a circle open to all parties, was the only obstacle to his happiness in a circle distinguished by the gentler suavities of life. But no sooner had a hasty glance round the circle assembled at the Embassy, satisfied him that it contained no face on which it was painful to him to look, than he resigned himself to genuine enjoyment of the brilliancy of a scene, how different from the vapid monotony of the dimly-lighted London soirées!—

Often, as he fixed his admiring gaze upon the groups collected on and around the crimson ottoman of the chamber opening to the angle of

the conservatory adjoining the ball-room, he fancied he beheld one of the courtly interiors of Watteau, realized by the charms of those Parisiennes of the *grand monde*, who impart grace to the fanciful attires of fashion that serve only to disfigure the women of other nations. The easy pleasantry never expanding into familiarity,—the affability never impertinently condescending,—the *prévenance* never too emphatic,—the high-breeding, in short, of those whose graces dignify high birth in many of the historical names of both the new court and the old, never struck him more forcibly than when developed in the saloon of l'Ambassade d'Angleterre. There, none of the mistrust which so often imparts gêne to a diplomatic circle. There, a momentary oblivion to political discordance. The word party seemed obliterated from all languages on passing the threshold.

But though aware that the family of Rostanges would, for nearly a month to come, remain at Les Etangs, Greville felt that the soirées

at the Embassy would soon become an intolerable pleasure. The Faubourg was rapidly reassembling its chosen coterie. Another week, and he must recede from their approach.

Sometimes, indeed, he reproached himself with the prolongation of his sojourn in Paris; more especially for not having taken his departure the moment his encounter with the Prince de J—— re-entangled him in the toils of the great world. Yet at the moment, so hurried an escape seemed impossible. So finely spun are the chains of etiquette which form the bondage of such circles, that though at the moment apparently strong as iron, no sooner is the crisis past which gave them force, than the eye of reason perceives that a breath had been sufficient to dissolve them and extricate the prisoner.—Yet the same crisis, again recurring, would find him again a slave!—

New Year's Day, that epoch of national generosity and rejoicing, now made its appearance, ushered in by the usual showers of bon-

bons. Unaccustomed to the forms of the day, Greville drove out as usual, prepared only to find the shops of Paris more gay and glittering than ordinary. But the throngs of animated human beings accosting each other in every street with salutations of friendship, or the warmth of kindred, struck him with so accusing a sense of his own isolation, that he hurried home again. His solitary chamber was less lonely than the crowd. Snatching up a book, he tried to invest his sympathies in fictitious interests.—In vain!—The spell of the hour was upon him. He wanted truth,—he wanted reality.—At such a season, chairs should be drawn round the fireside,—kindly words exchanged,—fond recollections indulged.—The birthday of the year is of all birthdays the most apt to revivify the pulses of dormant affection.

As if to cherish his griefs, he chose to dine at home,—he chose to dine alone.—François, whose humble offering of an orange-tree garnished with *immortelles* had been so graciously

received that morning as to encourage the belief that he was a favourite, vainly reminded him, from half hour to half hour, that it was time to dress for court. Satisfied that, not having to escort a lady to the Tuileries for whom it would be expedient to secure a seat, there could be no occasion for his appearing early in the throng, he deferred the operation of dressing so late, as to place his *remise* nearly the last on the long file of carriages proceeding to the château.

The extensive façade of the fine and quaint old palace,—the most characteristic of the public buildings of Paris,—looked gay and inviting from the brilliancy of light streaming from its multitude of windows; and as Greville ascended the majestic staircase, he felt as if approaching the presence of royalty by an appropriately royal avenue. The fine gallery of Louis Philippe was crowded with beautiful women in all the gorgeousness of courtly array; and the Salle des Maréchaux, and several suc-

ceeding chambers towards the throne-room, were lined with a similar display. Diamonds sparkled on every side; and the richest attires of modern fashion enhanced the loveliness of fair creatures of all nations and languages, to each of whom the royal family were addressing in turn some word of courteous greeting.

Amid the crowd of men, accoutred in military, diplomatic, or professional uniforms, occupying the centre of the different chambers, Greville trusted to pass unnoticed, till the King, after paying his compliments to his female guests, should withdraw as usual into the presence-chamber to receive his levee. He had even accomplished his task as far as to attain the *Salle des Maréchaux*, and accord his tribute of admiration to the brilliancy of that unrivalled hall, when a sudden and sickening consciousness came over him.

What business had he there at such a time?

What business had *he*,—the illegitimate,—the

impostor,—to figure at the court of the King of the French as lawful representative of one of the ancient peerages of Great Britain?

A mist appeared to dazzle his eyes as the idea suddenly presented itself to his mind!—Recognised by many of his fair countrywomen,—forced to return the eager salutations of the Macmichaels and Ebsworths, and trembling lest further civilities should be in store for him,—it was this re-association with the petty world of the coteries, which suddenly renewed the overpowering sense of his position!

Already he was hastening back through the gaudy multitude as rapidly as the obstructions of politeness would permit, when, at the lower end of the gallery, at that moment comparatively deserted by the officers crowding towards the spot where the Queen, escorted by her ladies, was engaged in receiving presentations, the clank of military accoutrements apprized him that some person was following closely in his rear. A moment afterwards, he found himself

familiarly accosted by name. The person of his intimate friend was, however, as strange as his voice; being that of a gay colonel of cuirassiers, fine with the finery of a new uniform, padded into the usual military caricature of the human form divine. Greville had bustled about the world sufficiently to acquire intimates of all countries and degrees; but by no possible effort could he recal to mind the individual by whom he was hailed so cavalierly. There was something almost Irish in the dauntlessness with which the stranger persisted in the familiarity of his address, to one who had evidently no recollection of his person.

"It is an age since I had the honour to possess you as an inmate, my dear Lord!"—cried he, on relinquishing the hand which had passively submitted to be shaken. "But, though a little the worse for wear, I knew you directly;—not altogether the worse, though,—for you are a trifle broader about the shoulders, and a trifle

less mimish about the chin!—You hold yourself better too, which is not to be wondered at, since I perceive that, in the interim, you have embarked in the profession."

"You are mistaken, Sir; this is not the badge of military service," replied Greville, glancing a moment at his deputy-lieutenant's uniform, and assuming an air which he had seldom known fail to put people in their place.

"A civil uniform, eh?—Well, well, you really need not look ashamed of it, among the strange apings of soldiership one sees here!"—said the unknown, shrugging his shoulders as he glanced contemptuously at the worsted epaulettes of a group of national guardsmen, engaged in friendly chat at no great distance.—"Did you ever see such *épiciers?*"—

"I see some very fine men, belonging, I believe, to a very valuable corps," replied Greville, coldly.

"Valuable?—Bah! So is the *gendarmerie*,—

I beg its pardon,—the municipal guard,—but one does not exactly expect to run against it in the palace of the sovereign."

"It is not always easy to conjecture against what one may run!"—replied Greville, almost irritated.

"Ha! ha! ha!—No! as you say, one finds oneself strangely mystified in a *topu bohn* such as this!—*Mais que voulez vous?*—One of the duties of a public man, now-a-days, is *de s'encanailler!—La patrie avant tout!*"—

Something in the stranger's mode of drawing up with the *rengorgement* of a pouting pigeon, as he uttered these words, suddenly recalled to Greville's mind his host of the Château de Grangeneuve!—But the Carlist colonel at the Tuileries!—The man who, at Dôle, he had overheard utter such vehement execrations against the reigning dynasty, a courtier to Louis Philippe!—His amazement was probably painted in his face!—

"I don't wonder you are surprised to see me here!" cried Colonel d'Aramon. "It almost surprises myself. But people of strong minds take strong resolutions. Finding that the lapse of years served only to confirm the stability of a government which shocked me principally by a presentiment of its *in*stability, I judged it a matter of duty to present my services to the throne, like every other right-thinking *enfant de la patrie;* and Louis Philippe has now no subject more devoted than your humble servant."

It was not the first time Lord Greville had found occasion to compassionate the King of the French, for the nature and complexion of his subjects' loyalty; but how could he be otherwise than forbearing with the cousin of Eugénie?—

"I rarely examine the root of a tree which brings forth good fruits," he replied, with a courteous bow;—"being too much the friend

of public order not to rejoice when I see honourable men, from whatever cause, augmenting the ranks of government."

"I have heard so much,—so very much of you, my dear Lord, since we parted at Grangeneuve!"—cried the Colonel,—an effusion of deeper red upon whose bronzed cheeks, seemed to indicate that Greville was speaking daggers to him,—"that is, such praises,—that you must pardon me for having thus unceremoniously claimed your acqu'tance. *Dainailleurs*, as you may well conceive, I do not know twenty people here to-night, and am only too happy to find *une figure de connoissance!*"

The mortifying drawback contained in the last phrase, was lost upon Lord Greville; who, with pardonable weakness, concluded that it was from his fair kinswomen, d'Aramon must have received flattering testimonials in his favour. He almost began to see something manly and soldierlike in the rough bearing of the colonel of cuirassiers:—

"My poor tenant, Caudebec, whom you enabled to renew his lease with me after the reparation of the mischief done by that accursed fire," resumed d'Aramon, twisting his mustachios, "is constantly chaunting the praises of the generous English lord, who threw about his thousand-franc notes and hazarded his precious life, as if neither of them were worth a pebble-stone!"—

"And the Marquis de Rostanges?" impatiently demanded Greville,—excusing the inquiry to his conscience, on the ground of eagerness to escape the recital of his own merits.

"The Marquis de Rostanges," repeated d'Aramon,—his broad unmeaning countenance suddenly contracting—"is, I believe, in Normandy." And though the inquiry had elicited no information new to Greville, the result was so far advantageous, that on this slight mention of the name of Rostanges, the Colonel instantly relinquished his button, and made a formal parting bow. That his sudden reserve arose

from knowledge of the resentment entertained by his gentle cousins against the man who had conducted himself towards them with such cruel ungraciousness, Lord Greville nothing doubted; the egotism of frail human nature forbidding him to conjecture that d'Aramon's disinclination to talk about the family, might originate in wrongs and resentments of his own. Thus left at liberty to accomplish his escape from the gallery, overheated by its prodigality of lights, Greville lost no further time in seeking his carriage.

But this chance encounter with the recanted Carlist, proved a serious advantage, by directing the current of his thoughts into a new channel. As he drove homewards, after long entanglement in the file of carriages still arriving through the *guichet*, the frantic protestations of legitimatism poured forth by d'Aramon at Dôle, recurred with redoubled force to his mind; and the contempt inspired by the infirmity of purpose of another, who, after affecting

such lofty demonstrations of loyalty, (the most chivalric of all the virtues of civilization,) had sunk into a mercenary,—"a bisognon base,"—lessened, if it did not efface, the scorn inspired by inconsistencies of his own.

CHAPTER IV.

C'était une belle et douce vie;—les jours s'écoulaient rapides au milieu de ces triomphes.

H. ARNAUD.

THE carnival had now commenced,—the season set in;—and the social brilliancy of Paris was at its brightest. That unique and many-coloured public, composed of all that is opulent or aristocratic of the various countries of Europe, hurrying to enjoy at their source the sparkling waters of the fountain of Pleasure, was displaying its gaudy plumage in the factitious sunshine;—or, in simple English, crowding the ball-rooms of Paris, and filling its coffers.

Happy city!—for the purchase of whose gewgaws, people are content to exhaust the mines,—reap the harvests,—despoil the forests,—and wring sweat from the brows of the serfs of their native soil!—Happy city! where people who are sad or sorry elsewhere, come to fling down the burthen of their woes!—

Every night, some gay assembly gathered together the congregation of the great. The diplomatic circles displayed, as usual, the collective wisdom of their bald heads and sallow faces, and the brightness of their constellations of stars;—*élite* of the *haute noblesse* of civilized Europe!—affording the most agreeable society, and constituting the galvanic battery whence emanates an electric chain encircling the destinies of mankind.—To resist the attraction of such a coterie, was difficult even for Greville; a coterie wherein no one is expected to exhibit a particle of his individual self; but where he may figure agreeably, conventionalized into a polished brick of the grand temple of European

intelligence, whereof diplomatists may be considered the connecting corner-stones.

To the dull, weekly ministerial soirées, or receptions, usually composed of fifty place-holders and two hundred place-seekers, with a dozen or two of ladies, chiefly old or ugly, connected with the *corps administratif* by ties actual or anticipatory,—succeeded those splendid balls, which the government of France, whether consular, imperial, royal, or civic, has invariably exacted of the administrators placed in authority over that dancing nation:—the *mot* of Talleyrand, concerning the Congress of Vienna, that "*Le congrès dansait mais ne marchait pas,*" being applicable to the two Chambers, in almost every January of successive years.

In vain did Greville forswear participation in these noisy pleasures. Among those who had furthered the object of his visit to Paris, was a veteran connected with the *ministère de la marine*, the Contre Amiral de Valsan, with

whom he had subsequently formed a more intimate acquaintance at the Château. Unaware of Greville's motives for absenting himself from society, the kind old man not only introduced him into the circle of his family connexions, but procured him a shower of ministerial invitations; as well as the services as master of the ceremonies of his own son, — by vocation an *élégant* of the *monde administratif*, and by profession an auditor of the *Conseil d'état*.

"At least, condescend to take a passing survey of our ministerial circles," remonstrated Ferdinand de Valsan, in reply to the pretexts by which Greville sought to excuse himself. "As a foreigner, it is your privilege to appear, without compromising yourself, in every society;—as a cosmopolite, (all travellers, now a-days, are, or pretend to be, cosmopolites,) you owe it to yourself to examine the coteries of *la jeune France*, as you have already done those of *la France fossile*."

"I fear I have neither health nor spirits for

young anything!" — replied Greville, with a smile, "and have consequently withdrawn from all contact with the fête-giving world."

"Ministerial fêtes may be supposed to give themselves," replied Valsan. "In frequenting them, you contract no obligation,—not even that of being amused.—Out of health and spirits?—*Ciel!* what would I not give to possess such qualifications,"—cried the light-hearted young man. "A genteel melancholy is just now the very thing to render a man irresistible. With the aid of a jaundiced complexion, hollow eyes, and a genius for sighing, I would undertake to extinguish with vexation every *dandy* most in vogue!—I envy you!"

"You are fortunate in the intactness of heart and constitution which enables you to jest upon physical and mental suffering," said Greville, coldly.

"*Pardon!*—a thousand times pardon, if I have annoyed you!"—said young Valsan, earnestly. "To own the truth, I thought you were devising

pretexts for avoiding my sister's ball to-night. It is true the hotel of the Home Department lies so distant from our meridian of the Chaussée d'Antin, as to render a journey thither almost as magnanimous an act of devotion as a pilgrimage to Jerusalem,—being in the very heart of the enemy's camp,—of the Faubourg St. Germain.—Nevertheless, I hope to entice you thither. Céline, who is a desperate Anglomane, will never forgive me if I fail to procure her the presence of Lord Greville, the idol of the Tuilleries, and her *beau idéal* of *le Grand Seigneur d'Angleterre*."—

Notwithstanding this florid compliment, Madame Clermont de Thorigny, the wife of the *Ministre de l'Intérieur*, was an Anglomane no further than regarded Honiton lace or Salisbury scissars; and scarcely knew by sight the young English lord presented by her brother. But Valsan had justly calculated upon the weakness of human nature,—especially human nature in the guise of a handsome young man of three-and-

twenty; and was anxious to introduce so attractive a person into the routine of the ministerial soirées.

There was something in Greville's gentle manners and graceful person, peculiarly fascinating to the French. They admired in his address the total absence of pretension, so common in young Englishmen of his caste; and as it necessarily happens that foreigners of distinction visiting Paris attach themselves to the society of the Faubourg, where parity of means and habits ensures congeniality of pursuits, it is rare for the coteries of the Chaussée d'Antin or the *bureaucratie*, to welcome into their set the *haute noblesse* of other countries. If sometimes allured into one of their gaudy saloons, the Russian Princess or Austrian Count is pretty sure to pronounce that it contains "*pas un chat de connoissance*," and return no more.

Unable, for instance, to withstand the flattering instances of Ferdinand de Valsan, Greville consented to accompany him that night to

the ministerial ball; and if proud of the whispers that greeted their entrance concerning the presentment of *le bel Anglais*, Valsan was no less gratified by Greville's genuine tribute of admiration to the brilliancy of the fête, and the loveliness of its female guests.

The science of ball-giving is so universally understood in France, that, at a day's notice, the art of the decorator will transform a suite of barns into elegant and well-lighted apartments; and let the gravest and most untowardly of mankind be honoured by government with a ministerial *portefeuille*, the dancing public is satisfied that his fêtes in the month of January will be all that it has a right to exact from a member of the cabinet.—But the hotel of the *Ministre de l'Intérieur* is anything but a series of barns; and Monsieur and Madame Clermont de Thorigny, if their name be unknown to the records of Hozier, or any other almanack than the *Almanac de la Cour*, were neither very untowardly nor particularly grave.

It was the first time Greville had found himself in the circle of the Chaussée d'Antin,—comprehending the *haute finance*, the *élite* of the *bureaucratie*, and the relics of the imperial court. A little excess in the splendour of their dress and ceremoniousness of their politeness, seemed alone to distinguish them from that of the *Faubourg;* but the beauty of the women impressed him as favourably at first sight, as, on a nearer acquaintance, the intelligence of the men. For both, education seemed to have done more than for those to whom, according to *his* prejudices, nature imparted instinctive graces, enabling them to dispense, to a certain degree, with superficial accomplishments.

As he received at the door, for instance, the elaborate welcome of Madame Clermont de Thorigny, whose youth and beauty were disfigured by the exaggerated trimmings of her ball-dress, the grotesque originality of her costly jewels, and a bouquet that might have covered a parterre, he could not but contrast the effort of her

civilities with the graceful nonchalance of Madame de St. Pierre. The Faubourg Duchess was neither so young nor so pretty as the minister's wife; but her manner was so much more simple, her tone so much more refined, her good breeding so much more intuitive, that the impression left on the spectator was twice as favourable.

Still, it was impossible not to be gratified by the exceeding graciousness of one who, surrounded by so much homage as Madame de Thorigny, found time and inclination to be gracious. Greville recollected the cold majesty of Lady Wirksworth, and felt cheered by the kindness of his fair hostess.

"Will you not dance?"—inquired Ferdinand de Valsan, pressing towards Greville, after a *valse*, in which he had enjoyed the distinction of whisking round the gorgeous diamond chatelaine of the little Russian Countess, Madame de Kersakoff, — whose presence in a ball-room was announced by the splendour of her

jewels, as the tiny glow-worm is betrayed by its light.

"I never dance. I told you this morning, if you remember, that I was no recruit for your *lions*."

"Hush, hush! If you deal in such *rococo* terms, you will be pronounced *tout ce qu'il y a de plus fossile!*"—cried Ferdinand. "The word *lion* has descended to *les Boulevarts*, to the heroes with long beards and *gants paille*, who make themselves heard at dinner at the Café de Paris, and make themselves seen in the balcon de l'Opéra. *Lion* is as much out of date in good society, as *muscadin*,—*incroyable*,—*merveilleux*.—It may come in again, perhaps, like the *roué* of the *régence*. *En attendant*, let me prevail upon you to take my place as the partner of Madame de Kersakoff, who is dying to make acquaintance with one in whom she discerns a *héros de roman*."

"A hero whose romance has reached the last page of its last volume!"—replied Greville,

smiling. "I should forfeit her good opinion were I to expose myself to the ordeal of even five minutes' conversation."

Valsan was too much in request, to stay and expostulate. Conceiving it impossible that a man of Greville's age and appearance could really dislike dancing, he attributed his refusals to the disgust often betrayed by his countrymen towards the mixed society inevitable in ministerial houses.

Greville did not long expose himself to the surmises of his young friend, or the indignation of Madame de Kersakoff. — His spirits were overpowered by the tumultuous scene. Though, in fact, far more brilliant than the gay and airy summer fêtes in which he had so joyously borne a part, there was between them general affinities which recalled to mind only too painfully the happier moments of his life.

On the morrow, he found that, for his own comfort, he had committed an act of indiscretion in appearing at the ball of the minister of

the home department. An Englishman of sufficient consideration to be a dinner-guest at the Chateau, was not likely to be overlooked; and as he had allowed it to be seen that his health was not too much impaired to admit of his gracing a ball-room, it was suggested that, to refuse the invitations of the other ministers to whom he had been made known by the royal family, would be an offence. The gentle disposition of Greville made him shrink from anything construable into an act of *hauteur;* and he accordingly resigned himself to pay his respects in succession at each of the ministerial houses.

To perform Kotoo to those who accept the salutation as mechanically as it is offered, is no great effort for even the laziest of mankind; nor was half an hour sacrificed in the course of the day to the exigencies of politeness a thing of much account. Still, poor Greville reviled himself for having subjected his patience to the trial.

A few nights after the ball, he found himself standing beside Ferdinand de Valsan in the saloon of another of the highest ministerial authorities.

"I am here to-night in attendance upon my father," observed Valsan; "you, I conclude, because a soirée in one of our leading salons politiques is more to the taste of a man who despises dancing, than the ball at the Austrian embassy, to which I am trying to steal away."

"I am here as an act of courtesy towards one, distinguished, both in England and elsewhere, for his hospitalities to my countrymen," replied Grenville.

"Do your ministerial hotels in London equal this splendid hotel?"—demanded Valsan, to whom these praises of his host did not appear peculiarly acceptable,—as the doors of the saloon, opening for the admission of an ambassador, gave to view the fine columns of a majestic hall.

An involuntary smile overspread the face of the Earl. "We do not shine in public build-

ings," said he. "Our speaker's house was consumed with the houses of parliament,—Downing Street is a nest of *bureaux*,—and, with the exception of the Admiralty and Ordnance, and the habitation of one of our great law officers, we have no official hotels. Our ministers, however, belong to a class which supersedes the necessity for providing t m with a town residence."

"Still, in my stupid opinion, it imparts dignity to office to point it out as specific," observed Valsan. "I like the statue of Jupiter Tonans to be enshrined in the temple of Jupiter Tonans. I should not feel half the respect I do for my brother-in-law, if he still resided in an apartment in the Rue Chautereine, instead of at the *ministère de l'intérieur*. The *huissiers* with their uniform, impose upon me;—and instead of slapping poor Thorigny on the shoulder when they usher me in, I naturally subside into my three bows."

"With us, I suspect, it would afford a serious objection against accepting office, to be obliged to quit such residences as Lansdown or Devonshire Houses, for a noisy mansion in Whitehall. But, tell me,—you called this just now a political *salon?*"—

"Essentially so," interrupted Valsan, "which is one of my reasons for finding it insupportable. *De par tous les députés!* it would be a merciful interposition for society, if our chamber were to prolong its debates till cock-crow, after the example of yours, and so disencumber our salons of the very respectable furniture which would be so much more in place in its very respectable lumber-room. They talk of a law for making steam-engines consume their own smoke:—far more desirable to make parliament consume its own politics!"—

"Desirable, for you or I, perhaps," replied Greville. "But there must surely be considerable advantage in the ex-official collision of

minds, which are required to think in concert."—

"Don't let them meet, then, on pretence of social intercourse," cried Valsan. "Let the wholesome physic be taken under its right name, not on pretence of being *eau sucrée*. You have no conception of the curse entailed upon our ministers' wives by this sort of *politique pralinée*. There is my own mother, for instance,—one of the most intelligent and agreeable women in France,—whose life has been devoted for the last twenty years to the presidency of a *salon politique*. Her spirit is worn out by the labour, which is anything but a labour of love. She has become incapable of using or understanding any better language than the jargon of official society;—and now, alas! my sister is devoted to the same *corvée!*"

"At least they have their reward in the importance attributed in France to official distinctions," observed Greville.

to require an English woman to preside over a *salon politique*, would be to expose her to the ridicule of all parties."

"They are right,—*mille dieux!*—they are right!" cried Valsan, with affected earnestness. "What right have we to wither the smiles of a pretty face, and plant crowsfeet round a pair of eyes *taillé en amande*, by imposing upon them a task which we ourselves find so tedious? Darning linen and sewing buttons were rapture, compared with the bore of listening to the mouthing of that *faiseur de phrases* the Comte de ——, or the humbug of our philanthropic député, Alphonse de Calinard. I never reflect upon my mother's or Céline's destinies without a groan!—Two such happy cheerful spirits to be broken on the wheel of politics!—To hear nothing but *projets* of this, and *projets* of that, when they want to be gossiping over the fire about *la pluie et la beau temps* with their husbands and children!"

Lord Greville did not think it necessary to suggest to his young friend that the deportment of Madame Clermont de Thorigny had impressed him strongly with an idea, that she would derive less satisfaction from the discussion of the weather with her prosy husband than from the privilege *de trôner* as a minister's wife; or that Frenchwomen are universally endowed by nature with instinctive tact for the little arts indispensable to the crooked career of officiality.

"Behold the result of the respect conceded to intellectual distinctions among us!" whispered Valsan, pointing out to his companion a woman of highly exotic aspect, whose beauty, though somewhat on the wane, was enhanced by every adornment that coquetry could devise or money procure. "See how they crowd round her the moment she enters the room!—Boys and veterans, statesmen and warriors,—all at her feet! In your moral country every door

would be closed against her. Here, such is the regenerating power of genius, that had her indiscretions been thrice as notorious—(and they are bruited loudly and widely enough!)—we should still open our arms to one who, with the scholarship of a man combines the most feminine sweetness and grace. But her arrival warns me to be off!—If once within reach of the fascinations of her voice and eye, no chance to night for my ball!—Shall we go together?"—

"I will accompany you as far as the hall.—I am not going to Madame A.'s."

"Not going?—Why it will be the best ball we have had this year!"

"I comprehend the extent of my sacrifice.—But I have not yet attended Madame A.'s receptions, from a motive purely personal; and shall consequently, though invited, absent myself to-night."

"Better relent in your own favour!—It is of all others the *salon* that combines the *notabilités*

of the Faubourg with those of our humbler world."

Lord Greville smiled as he persisted in his negative. Valsan had unconsciously cited the very motive of his pertinacity in avoiding the *Ambassade d'Autriche*. "It is decreed that I must go home quietly to bed," said he, as they moved together towards the ante-room.

"Go home to bed?—Not go to Madame A——'s?"—brayed a brazen voice; and lo, squaring his ungraceful shoulders to push his way into the room, and elevating his bushy chin, Colonel d'Aramon inflicted his usual formidable "shakhands" upon Greville. "I am just come from the opera," said he, as earnestly as if replying to an anxious question; "and I assure you my opinion is anything but unfavourable to the new ballet. The opera, we know, is not what it was,—we are not to expect from it the wonders of its high and palmy days;—nor is Fanny Elssler, Bigottini—we cannot ask the

impossible, even of Fanny Elssler,—but she is really far from despicable in this new thing. In many points, she rises to excellence. I recommend all my friends to go and see it.—I am on my way to the ball.—Everybody is on their way to the ball.—*You*, my dear Lord, must positively not think of shirking the ball. — It would be a positive slight.—I, for instance, am fatigued (as I heard you complain of being.) After a three-act ballet,—and above all,—after throwing myself, even for ten minutes, into such a *cohue* as this," he continued, with a scarcely-concealed gesture of contempt, "one has a right to plead fatigue. Yet such is my sense of what is due to certain distinctions, that I shall make it a point to shew myself at the ball of the Austrian Ambassadress."

"Is this blockhead likely to let you off?" whispered Valsan to Lord Greville, trying to disentangle him from d'Aramon. "If not, I must positively leave you in his clutches, being engaged for the second waltz to Madame de St. Sévron."

of the Fan[illegible]
world."

Lor[illegible]
neg[illegible] the most charming *valseuse* in the Fau-
v[illegible] Madame de St. Sévron,—a bride, you
[illegible]. This is her first appearance in the world
[illegible]ce her marriage,—and a marvellous sensation
[illegible]e will excite!"

"She is very handsome," replied Greville, in a husky voice, fancying that some remark was indispensable.

"Ay, by the way, she was telling me this morning that she had known you a year or two ago,—on your return from Italy, was it not?—Better come with me to-night and renew your acquaintance! We can get off while your noisy friend is busy in following up his system of protection of the Fanny of Fannys by assuring the old Duke yonder, in confidence, that she is not Bigottini."

Again did Greville decline, and once and again persist in his refusal, when their cabriolets drove successively to the door.

Farewell, then!" cried Valsan,—"I shall make the best excuses I can for both of us to Madame de St. Sévron.—that is, if I can still prevail upon her to award me the honour of a valse. *Alerte, mon cher milor!* Here is your bold cuirassier on the *perron*. To horse,—or —rather, to cabriolet, and away!"

CHAPTER V.

Ce que j'ai appris, je ne le sais plus. Le peu que je sais encore, je l'ai deviné.—CHAMFORT.

MEANWHILE, the season proceeding so brilliantly on the banks of the Seine, was progressing with cheerless tediousness at Greville Abbey.

Eighteen months had elapsed since the crisis by which Lady Greville was disunited from her son. At first, she persuaded herself that their separation was to be of a temporary nature; and that, after a short absence, attracted back

by the decencies of English society and the solid comforts of an English home, he would perceive the expediency of burying the past in oblivion, and coalescing in her schemes for his establishment in life. She reckoned largely, in short, upon the recklessness of youth, eager in pursuit of enjoyment, without too curious an examination into its means and nature.

But by degrees, these anticipations died away. In Greville's letters, not an allusion to the past,—not a syllable of a more intimate understanding between them,—not a hint of relenting!—Generalities relating to his foreign excursions filled every page;—dry, barren generalities, which she might have found in the last book of travels. Had there been one tender word,—one reference, however remote, to his sufferings and her own,—she had been content. But, search as she would, analyze as she might any obscure expression, she could detect no single idea affording hope that she stood in his eyes as she felt she had a right to stand, as a martyr,—a martyr

whose griefs and atonements were congenial with his own.

How often,—when some blotted word towards the conclusion of his letter defied her decipherment,—how often, when the signature, as is so frequently the case with letters from those we love, had been defaced by impatience in breaking the seal,—how often did she examine and re-examine the fracture, in the trust that it might contain some kinder qualification,—something beyond "Your affectionate son, HUGO!"

His title he had abandoned; even as from childhood SHE had deviated from common custom, in addressing him by his Christian name. But she thought that in her loneliness, in her grief, he might perhaps adopt some kindlier word than of old, in order to express his sense of commiseration. These letters, therefore, except as conveying the certitude that he was still living, were invariably a source of disappointment to the poor mother.

To his health or happiness, Greville never

adverted. The eligibility of keeping tranquil his mother's mind during his absence, warned him to forbearance on such points. So long as he spoke not of himself, so long as his handwriting remained unchanged, she was free to suppose him well and happy; and even the long silence arising from his dangerous sufferings in Egypt, he allowed her to ascribe to the miscarriage of letters, rather than avow that he had been on the point of death in his banishment from her and home.

The anguish inflicted by all this was beyond his power of comprehension. The organization of man renders it as impossible for him to appreciate the yearnings of a mother's affection, as the nature of woman to understand the profound agony of a strong masculine heart. His studied reserve was attributed by Lady Greville to indifference, — to heartlessness. She even fancied that, humiliated by her consciousness of his illegitimacy, he had imbibed towards her feelings of dislike. They stood towards each,

in short, in one of those false positions engendered by departure from ingennousness, the fertile source of so many unworthy constructions.

Under the influence of afflictions such as these, the character of Lady Greville had undergone a complete transformation. For years she had contrived, by dint of great moral exertion, to form herself to the part she had been compelled to play in the world. The certitude of appearing cold, selfish, absolute, had never disturbed her equanimity; for the establishment of her son in the enjoyment of domestic happiness and worldly distinction was to be the exceeding great reward of her self-denial. But now that this hope had vanished, now that she saw there was no chance of his settling at Greville Abbey as a husband and father, or in his place as a peer of England, an honour to the order to which she had sacrificed so much to secure his footing, she threw up her task of dissimulation in disgust!—

Instead of the high-minded, glorious being, the pride of the nation and admiration of society, which she had foreseen from the hour of his birth in that only son, he was about to loiter away his listless existence, — achieving nothing, enjoying nothing, adorning nothing,— "unstable as water,"—unequal to the accomplishment of a single manly distinction.—But above all,—he was ungrateful!—The hand-to-hand and heart-to-heart affection which she had toiled for, and after which she thirsted, as the wanderer in the desert after the cooling well, was denied her.—What mattered, therefore, the event of her future days?—What mattered it, whether the oaks of Greville Abbey flourished, or were cut down?—Whether the pictures of its galleries were dim with mildew, or bright with the effulgence of genius?—Whether the gardens were embellished with every flower that variegates the savannahs of foreign climes, or suffered to run to waste?—All that she had done, devised, cultivated, had been for him,

for his enjoyment, for his delectation; and since he was gone from her for ever, lost to her in body and mind, what availed the rest?—The widow may pledge her affections in second wedlock, the deserted lover may seek some fairer idol;—but the mother, abandoned in her age by the child in whose existence she has embarked her joys and sorrows, loses all by the shipwreck of that single venture. There is no redemption for such utter bankruptcy of the heart.

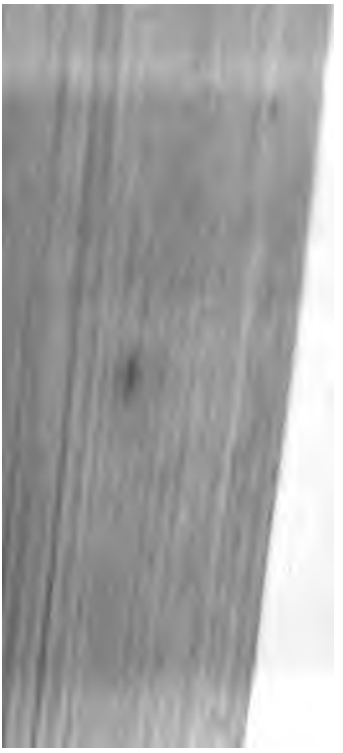
Fortunately, the despair of Lady Greville was of anything but a haughty cast; perhaps, because unembittered by remorse. It did not appear to her that she could have acted otherwise than she had done; if unhappy, it was through the instrumentality of others. There was consequently no moroseness in her self-abandonment; her grief displayed itself in listless forbearance with all the world. The calmness she had before assumed as a mask, was now natural. The root and branch of her happiness were alike withered;—"*la goutte d'eau*

comme la rivière était tarie!" She cared little whether friend or foe were spectators of her desolation.

"Wonders will never cease!" cried Mrs. Massingberd, one day, on hearing the squire receive intelligence from his groom that the veterinary surgeon had declared his favourite mare to have sprained her shoulder over an awkward grip lying in the bridle road betwixt Greville Abbey and Hill Hall. "*You* a visitor to Lady Greville?—*You* riding over to the Abbey for a morning call?—I wonder what Julia would say if she heard it!"—

"She would say, if she took the liberty of sitting in judgment on the conduct of her father, that he shewed a spirit of charity becoming his gray hairs, in extending a friendly hand towards a fallen enemy."

"A fallen enemy!—What do you mean by a fallen enemy?" cried Mrs. Massingberd. "I am sure *I* should be very glad to tumble down



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"And prettily surprised she must have been! Why, I don't believe you had paid her a morning visit before these three years!"—

"Double it, and you will be nearer the mark!—But what then?—Kindness, like summer, may come late, but never *too* late! Lady Greville perfectly understood my good intentions; though I can't say I found her looking so ill as *your* croaking and Anodyne's favourable view of the case, prepared me to expect."

"I'm sure I can't guess, then, *how* ill you wanted to find her. I'm persuaded she wont live through the winter."

"She wont live through the winter at Greville Abbey,—for she has taken a house, till April, at Torquay."

"Dear me, how absurd!—when every one knows that the climate of the sheltered valley, where the Abbey, like other abbeys, lies niched in clover, is as mild as Madeira."

"Change of scene is sometimes as advantageous as change of air. The poor woman is

evidently fretting. Do you remember how I used to predict that when that lad of hers slipped his collar, 'twould be long enough before she recovered her hold upon him?—'Tis now a year and a half since Lord Greville left England; and nearly three months since she heard a word of his movements!"

"Humph!—I suspect *you* would not die of fretting, Mr. Massingberd, if you had heard no news of Frederick for the last three months."—

"How often, Madam, must I remind you, that if *my* son,—he is yours also;—and that every taunt with which you favour me concerning his follies, ought to inflict an equal pang upon both his parents!"

"I can't agree with you. I neither sowed his follies, by spoiling him,—nor cultivated them by concealment."—

"Concealment!—No! To do you justice, Fred was never guilty of a fault that you did not proclaim four-and-twenty hours afterwards, in the market-place at Squeamington!—It is

not every woman that has the grace to suffer in silence, like Lady Greville!"

"Why, I declare you're getting quite the champion of Lady Greville,—'the cold-hearted, worldly Lady Greville,' as you used to call her."

"I called her what I thought her!—But when I see a woman's afflictions weighing her down into the grave, and her worldliness consist in renunciation of all earthly pomps and vanities, I am free to admit that I have mistaken her, or that she has amended her vocation. Ask Dowdeswell!—he will tell you that there has been something almost unnatural in the poor woman's meekness, ever since she lost sight of her son. Ask Lady Brooks, and she will tell you there has never been a smile on the Countess's face since she——"

"I suppose she can't bear to see the period of her power draw to an end?" interrupted the little spiteful old lady. "Next year, young Greville comes of age, you know; and where will she be then?"

"Invested, most likely, with the attributes of immortality!" replied the Squire, in a tone of solemn reproval. — "The poor woman will be in her grave!—But don't let us talk any more about the matter. It seems ordained that Greville Abbey is ever to be a bone of contention between us. When she was happy and healthy, you made me sick by puffing her excellence; now she is sad and sorry, you provoke me by crowing over her decline. But, once for all, understand, Mrs. Massingberd, that Lady Greville, in her present mood of mind, has become anew the widow of my friend; and by Jove, ma'am, neither your jeers nor any other motive shall prevent my paying her the respect due to the distress of a stout mind bearing up against affliction."

Such was the desolation of the home he had abandoned; while Greville, scarcely less depressed in spirit than his mother, was sauntering through the brilliant crowds of the French capital,—"among them, but not of them."

Even the brief moments of pleasure imparted by the rare combinations of beauty, wit, and graciousness, with which the coteries of Paris fascinate the eyes and understandings of superficial observers, were now at an end; and gladly would he have withdrawn himself from the spot, but from the dread of appearing to take flight on the approach of the Comte de St. Sévron and his bride.

After thirty, a man of the world follows his devices and inclinations;—till that epoch, the *qu'en-dira-t-on* retains an overmastering influence. After thirty, he discovers that, frame his sayings and doings as he may, they must either offend the great majority of commonplace people, or the small minority of the initiated;—that either quantity or quality must be arrayed against him;—and consequently adopts one or other of two golden rules, "*fais ce que dois, advienne qui pourra,*" or "*fais ce qui te fait plaisir, trouve à redire qui voudra!*" Greville was still remote from the epoch of

independence. He was not yet arrow-proof against the shafts of ridicule. The wisdom begotten of sickness and solitude, receded from the garish eye of pleasure,—as ill at ease among the frivolities of fashion as a sober owl in the gilded parrot-cage of a lady's boudoir.

At thirty, as at eighteen, he would have ordered horses to his carriage and made the best of his way to the Antelope at Marseilles, or the Ship Inn at Dover;—leaving cards of adieu or apology for Madame la Comtesse of this, or his Excellency the Ambassador from that;—a little word of excuse to Achille de Cerny, with whom he was engaged to dine, and another little word to a pretty Russian Countess who had enlisted his services as her cavalier. But at four-and-twenty,—timid, sensitive four-and-twenty,—he fancied his abrupt departure from Paris would betray not only to his *laquais de place*, but to all these people, from the solemn ambassador down to the giddy St. Petersburgian, that he was flying from the sight of

the bridal happiness of the Count and Countess Tristan de St. Sévron!—As if the world of the Carnival were not too busy with follies of its own, to examine, beyond the surface, those of other people!—

Never had poor Greville submitted with a worse grace to the iron collar of politeness, than when compelled to present himself at the apartments of Madame de Kersakoff; who, at a diplomatic dinner, had given him rendezvous as her cicerone to visit the gallery of Aguado. His ill-humour did not decrease on finding the pretty little Russian coiled up in sables before the fire, in utter indifference to her appointment.

"*Did* I talk of going to see the pictures to-day?" said she. "I dare say I did, if you say so.—But it is so horribly cold,—and pictures are so horribly tiresome;—and I have got such a horrible *migraine!*"—

A Frenchman would have perceived from the *moue* of the blooming little face that peeped out

of her well-furred *vitchoura* that the fanciful beauty only wanted coaxing to ring and order her carriage. But Greville, seizing on the pretext to throw off his engagement, instantly rose with assiduous apologies for having intruded upon the solitude of an invalid.

"Nay, stay and try to amuse me, since you are here!" said she, motioning him to be seated. "*Y a-t-il du nouveau aujourd'hui?*—Are we to have war?—When will they have done rehearsing the new opera?—Is Torn's ball to be *costumé?*—What has transpired concerning the express from Constantinople?—Is not 'Pauline' a gem?—When are we to dance at the Hotel de Ville?—*Il me semble que ce cher Préfet nous oublie.*"

Albert de La Roche Aymar, or even Ferdinand de Valsan, instead of attempting to supply answers to queries overflowing as if from the countless tongues of rumour, would have silenced the pretty little *ennuyée* with some startling piece of intelligence. Greville was a novice.

Greville, like a common-sensical Englishman, began at the beginning; and instead of assuring her that her cap *la coëffait divinement*, that the *douillette* of her *demie santé* became her better than the gayest full-dress of other women, and that the Rajah of Catamaran had abdicated, he began with peace and war as gravely as Shakspeare's Nestor; and was proceeding to the new opera with a vigour of prose calculated to do honour to a debate upon the corn laws; when Madame de Kersakoff naturally interrupted him with a new string of interrogatories.

"Was it true that a lap-dog with a diamond necklace round its neck had been sent as a wedding cadeau to the young Comtesse de St Sévron? — How was the Chamber to divide upon the eastern question?—Had he heard that the *Giraffe* was *heureusement accouchée d'un giraffon?*" &c.

Imperfectly skilled, alas! in

The science not unwise to trifle well,

the perplexed Greville made so poor a stand under this attack, that the little Countess gave him up in despair; and conceiving it would be less of a bore to visit a picture gallery with an uncommunicative man than to endure him tête-à-tête, discovered that her *migraine* might perhaps benefit by a drive, and ordered her carriage.

"*Chez Monsieur le Marquis de las Marismas!*" said the Countess to her footman, as she crossed the vestibule.

"*Chez Agundo!*"—repeated the footman to the coachman, as he took his place behind the chariot, and five minutes afterwards, they entered the stately courtyard in the Rue Grange Batelière of a superb mansion, once the notorious *Salon*, and now the palace of a stock-jobber. As they received from the hands of a chasseur, arrayed in a gorgeous livery, a printed catalogue of pictures which, if original, had done honour to the collection of a crowned head, the Countess remarked querulously to her companion that, with the exception of the gal-

leries of Prince Lichtenstein and Prince Esterhazy at Vienna, she had never seen the warmth and comfort of the public so nobly provided for as by the Spanish Mæcenas. And what right had a *nouveau riche* to affect the airs of a sovereign?

"I am come only to see Canova's Magdalen," added she, with signal disregard to the *amour propre* of other loungers in the gallery. "They tell me there are fine pictures here by Velasquez, Murillo, and other Spanish masters —But I don't care to look at them. If they were only tolerable, one might put one's faith in their authenticity.—But chef-d'œuvres of Murillo and Velasquez don't drop from the skies into the money market! Money will do wonders.—But money, though it may furnish fine houses and fine liveries, will not improvisate a fine picture gallery.—I want to see the Magdalen.—The Magdalen requires no pedigree to attest its originality.—Pray take me straight to the Magdalen."

Straight towards the Magdalen did Greville, already familiar with the merits of the interesting collection before him, conduct his whimsical charge. But before they had half accomplished the tour of the gallery, Madame de Kersakoff, who, since their departure from home, had contrived to whine her discontents against the weather, the springs of her carriage, the pace of her horses, the tenu of her servants, the height of the staircase, and some fifty other imaginary evils, began to discover that the parquet was too highly waxed, and that she would just as soon skait upon the canal de l'Ourcq as complete her expedition.

To draw her arm closer within his own, and breathe earnest re-assurances to the timid beauty that his care and assiduity should secure her from all accidents, was a matter of course. Had Madame de Kersakoff been a less pretty woman, Greville and the rest of her victims would probably have discovered that she was *exigeante* beyond the reach of human patience;

but with so sweet a smile, and eyes as blue as the depths of a mountain lake, she was of course privileged to be as disagreeable as suited her convenience. So long as a man perceives that the caprices to which he is required to administer, expose him to the envy rather than the contempt of other men, he is content to be a slave. Greville noticed, as he whispered his re-assurances to the *jolie capricieuse*, that several loungers in the gallery regarded him as a very happy man; and submitted manfully to his fate.

"*Partons—mon Dieu! partons!—je me sens un redoublement de ma migraine!*" cried she, at last, having attempted all other modes of exciting his sympathy. "The glare of these horrible pictures is killing me with the headache!—"

In the vestibule below, as they stood waiting for the carriage, the Countess discovered that the tedious descent of the staircase had completed her annihilation; and down she sat beside the stove, to display her affectations for

the amusement of the corn-flower and poppy *livrée* of the Marquis de Las Marismas.

"Did you notice that singularly fine portrait of a woman in a monastic habit, half-way down the gallery?" said Greville, addressing his companion, in hopes of withdrawing her attention from her own ailments.

"Half-way down the gallery? No!—I saw nothing as we skaited our way back through the gallery but the frightful bonnet of Madame de St. Sévron. Herbault may say what he will, but those marabout trimmings on a winter bonnet make a woman's face resemble the visage of a half-fledged owlet. *C'est atroce!* Really Madame de St. Sévron was *à montrer au doigt.*"

Lord Greville, after the first shock of surprise at hearing how nearly and how unconsciously he had been on the point of stumbling into the presence of Eugénie, was vexed to perceive a smile of intelligence pass among the footmen who were in waiting. The servants of Madame de St. Sévron were doubtless among them. But

though it would have been easy to render the further remarks of Madame de Kersakoff incomprehensible to them by addressing her in English, (a language which, like most well-born Russians, she spoke with the fluency of a native,) the proper name must still betray that Madame de St. Sévron was the person who invested her countenance with so contemptuous an expression.

"*Quant à cette bonne Madame de St. Sévron,*" continued she; "nothing can be a greater blunder than her fancying that because she is a bride, she may give herself the airs of a beauty. The notion of *her* leading a fashion is quite preposterous!—Don't you think so?—But I forget!—She is of the Faubourg world,—only just arrived, too, from the provinces,—and you have probably never seen her. If we wait here a little longer, she will make her appearance; when you will be able to decide whether she is worthy the lap-dog with the diamond neck-lace presented to her by the Prince de Chaulieu."

Such an intimation was of course the means of causing Madame la Comtesse de Kersakoff's carriage to be announced without loss of time; but even while rejoicing in his escape, Greville felt satisfied that he must have been seen by Eugénie, devoting his attentions to one of the emptiest and idlest of the butterflies fluttering in the coteries of the fashionable world. His adieus were as cold as Kamschatka; and Madame de Kersakoff was perhaps justified in her confidence to Achille de Cerny that night at the opera, that "ce *Milor*, whom he had presented to her acquaintance, was *ennuyeux comme la pluie*;—*be-beau*,—*mais be-bête*."

"Better make up my mind to *brusquer* the meeting!"—cried he, after pacing his drawing-room for an hour, in utter discomposure, on reaching home. And to the Italian opera he went that night, far more with a view of daring an encounter with the fair bride of the Faubourg, than of enjoying the mellow cadences of Rubini.

"Which is Madame de St. Sévron's box?"—was his straightforward inquiry of Achille de Cerny, whom he met coming out of that of Madame de Kersakoff, which emitted a dandy and an overpowering scent of patchouli, whenever it opened.

"You are out of luck, *mon cher*,"—replied Cerny. "It is not her night. Her box is the third from the column, on the ground tier."

By a sudden relaxation of every nerve, at this announcement, Greville became conscious of their previous tension. He almost ground his teeth to find that the self-command he had been exercising for the last two hours was thrown away.

"Come with me to-night to the Hotel de St. Pierre,—it is the Duchess's first reception; and *there* you will be sure to see the St. Sévrons," added Cerny, detecting the emotion of his companion.

"Thanks,—I seldom go to parties;—never,

when I can avoid it!"—replied Greville. And again, he returned home in all the irritation of mind arising from the consciousness of a baffled purpose.

Few people are at the trouble of analyzing their own feelings. The beautiful exhortation of the poet Mickievics, "Have a heart—and examine it!"—has no meaning for the multitude. But to those *possessed* of hearts, who *do* descend to the duty of self-inquiry, it is a curious study to perceive how suddenly, after a long struggle of the feelings, the mist clears up which left us in doubt as to the nature of the predominant passion. Even as Greville had become suddenly aware, in London, of the nature of Eugénie's ascendancy over his mind, he now saw that, till the moment of her marriage, he had cherished hopes of the eventual removal of the obstacles which divided them from each other. Hitherto, he had never been thoroughly impressed with the evils of his fate; but every

ness was become doubly embittered by the
tude that he was now an object of indiffer-
to her. Of all he had been compelled to
n, the greatest sacrifice was the domestic
conferred by the noble-minded Eugénie de
gis on the happy household of another!—

CHAPTER VI.

On n'aurait pu voir une tête plus belle, plus noble, plus virginale. Phidias, pour sculpter sa Minerve, n'aurait pas désiré un autre modèle.

MERIMÉE.

It was provoking enough to be reminded, a day or two afterwards, by Countess Kersakoff, (who having, after the fashion of the *grandes dames* of her country, left her husband to duties in the Imperial household, was forced to recruit into her service, as an escort, any agreeable foreigner lying at the mercy of her caprices,)—

that he had promised to escort her to the Académie. Greville had a rooted antipathy to the French opera, unless when modified by the performance of some popular ballet; and on the present occasion, he had to submit to the shrill pipe of the little coquette on one side, and on the other, the

Guns, trumpets, blunderbusses, drums, and thunder

of the Huguenots!—A succession of visitors, however, reconciled Madame de Kersakoff to her fate in having so sober a cavalier; nor was it till towards the close of the last act that she voted the whole affair *profondément ennuyeux*, and begged him to go in search of the carriage.

Apparently, the whole audience shared in Madame de Kersakoff's opinion of a piece which they had seen often enough to become weary even of its merits,—for the *foyer* and *vestibule* were already encumbered; and lo! just as he was pushing through the crowd in search of the Countess's chasseur, a cry from the

annonciateur, that "*la voiture de Madame la Comtesse de St. Sévron était avancée!*" caused him to hurry from the door. A moment afterwards, amid the throng of footmen and fine ladies at the foot of the staircase, the Prince de Chaulieu, dragging onwards a lady wrapt in a costly mantle, passed near him; and in the apprehension that it might possibly be Eugénie, hastening to her carriage, Greville drew back behind the iron railing. He had, however, already attracted the notice of Chaulieu's fair companion; who, following him to his retreat, extended one of those symmetrical and well-gloved hands which only the coquetry of Paris is capable of exhibiting.

The smiling face which justified this friendly greeting, though happily not that of Eugénie, presented the charming countenance of her intimate friend, Sidonie de Chaulieu.

"How arre you?"—said she, in choice Faubourg English. "I herrd you vas in Parees. Vy do you not come and see me? Ave you

sin Eugénie and Sophie?—Non?—Ah! you must come and mit them *chez nous.*"—

The Prince de Chaulieu impatiently interrupted and hurried her away, to prevent the carriage driving off, before any answer could be given; and a few minutes afterwards, Greville was himself hastening Madame de Kersakoff towards hers, with nearly similar impatience.

"I was very near getting Monsieur de St. Sévron to go and assist you in finding my people; I was afraid you were lost on the road," said she, pettishly, on his return with news of having found the carriage.

"You have seen Monsieur de St. Sévron, then?"—said Greville, eagerly.

"Did you not find him with me just now?—Ah! no—he was gone to look after his wife.—Poor fellow!—he used to be so agreeable five years ago at St. Petersburg;—and now, so changed!—But what an idiot,—at his age and with his habits, to encumber himself with a young wife!—*Aussi, il est à parier qu'il s'en*

répent, — for I never saw a man look more thoroughly out of humour."

Greville readily conceived that any man might look out of humour when exposed to the whimsicalities of Madame de Kersakoff. But there was sacrilege in the suggestion that the husband of Eugénie could view his marriage with regret!

"To-morrow night is the ball of our embassy,"— whispered Madame de Kersakoff, from among the chenille tassels of the Geneviève in which her foolish little face was enveloped. "Pray don't forget that you have promised to be my cavalier for the evening."

Greville had no alternative but a grateful bow. He would probably, however, have procured a medical certification of illness to exempt him from the fête, but for the recollection that in a Russian salon the *notabilités* of the Faubourg were sure to be collected. He went accordingly, resolved to renew his acquaintance with the St. Pierres, and others of a circle

which was beginning its festivities, now that the agitation of the ministerial fêtes was relaxing.

It was a noble ball. In most countries, the Russians bear away the palm wherever magnificence is concerned. A sort of barbaric splendour magnifies their ideas of hospitality; and like the genii of an Arabian tale, whose vocation it is to erect palaces in deserts, they seem to fancy it impossible to erect them on too grand a scale. The Russians, in short, are playing on the stage of continental civilization, the part assumed by the English a century ago. If John Bull no longer swaggers along the grand tour with his pockets overflowing with guineas, begging to be robbed, the Muscovite, who dashes over the same ground with his equipages, emitting clouds of smoke, and his travelling trunks studded with malachite, is quite as sure a mark for exaction.

Scarcely had Greville ceded to the arm of the Prince de Chaulieu for a *valse*, the trouble-

some little personage under his protection, when he found himself confronted face to face with the Count de St. Sévron. A sudden flush overspread the faces of both!—For a moment, the Count seemed, like himself, overpowered by some painful reminiscence, inclining him to reserve. But the sincere regard with which the young Englishman had inspired him on their first acquaintance, quickly dispelled the impression; and he extended his hand with almost as friendly a movement as Sidonie de Chaulieu the preceding night.

"Not a word of congratulation on my marriage?"—cried he, forestalling the compliment which he fancied about to burst from the lips of Greville. "I am now a Benedict of a fortnight standing, and have heard nothing during that time from my friends, but their wishes for my happiness. On this occasion, let me rather inquire after your own. One of my countrymen (having heard prayers put up for your recovery last year in the Convent of St. Catherine, at

Sinai) had threatened us, my dear Lord, that we were never to see you more?"—

"I underwent several severe attacks of illness in the East," replied Greville, trusting that the agitation which caused his hands to tremble was not equally perceptible in his voice and countenance. "I have been a great wanderer since we parted at Chantilly. I have even pitched my tent in the deserts of Libya."

"When you return to London, *mon cher*, the Travellers' Club will attest that *I*, too, have accomplished wonders since I saw you!"—replied St. Sévron, gaily. "To reach your *ultima Thule* is almost as great a pilgrimage for a *badaud* like myself, as for you to attain the source of the Nile."

"You have visited Scotland?—As a sportsman, of course?—Were you very successful?"—

"I went on matters of business, and was wholly *un*successful," replied St. Sévron, gravely. *Passons là-dessus*,—and tell me why you have never been to see me since your arrival?—On

hearing from Madame de Sévron that you were in Paris, I hastened to your old quarters at the Hotel des Princes. They knew nothing of you."

"I had promised myself"—Greville was beginning, with evident hesitation.

"Come, come! I like you too well to drive you to the poor resource of studied apology!" interrupted St. Sévron. "We have shaken hands, and are now in charity. All I ask is, that you will repair your fault by coming quickly to the Hotel St. Sévron, and returning often."

Greville replied by a bow, which he strove to render affirmative.

"There is one old friend of yours, however, who is less disposed to be forgiving," resumed the Count. "Madame de Rostanges cannot pardon your not having inquired after the health of her husband. Poor Rostanges, as you are probably aware, is in a most precarious state. We had scarcely grounds for hoping he would

ever rally sufficiently to attempt the journey to Paris, which was my wife's motive for insisting on the solemnization of our marriage in Normandy. The gratification, however, of beholding the cheerful faces of two people to whose happiness he had contributed, has exercised a salutary effect; and they are now, after a year's absence, once more in the Rue St. Dominique. You will not, I trust, enlarge the catalogue of your sins past forgiveness, by absenting yourself much longer from their house."

"I shall do myself the honour of calling there to-morrow," said Lord Greville, unable to throw off his embarrassment sufficiently to emulate the easy tone of his companion.

"Madame de Rostanges, as I need not tell *you*, who formed so just an appreciation of her merits," resumed St. Sévron, "proves the best of nurses, as she was before the best of wives. Nothing can exceed her devotion to the invalid. She will not hear of leaving him, which I approve. But I see no occasion

has been trying to persuade me there are none to be had. The Prince de Chaulieu will not listen to my assurances that in *this* house everything is to be had."

Satisfied that he should lead an easier life by evading than by opposing her whims, Greville hastened off in obedience to her commands. He even succeeded in the accomplishment of her wish; and was slowly returning, when the sudden revulsion of blood to his heart as he caught sight of a finely-turned head, round which a heavy braid of raven hair seemed to form a natural diadem, apprized him that he was in the presence of Eugénie.

But was it her, indeed?—The smile of youth no longer on her lip,—the elation of joy no longer in her eyes,—the bloom of girlhood no longer on her cheek!—Pale as marble, and grave with more than matronly gravity, the salutation with which she returned his profound bow, though hurried by surprise, brought not the slightest tinge of colour to her face. Her beauty, which

was still remarkable, recalled to Greville's mind the face of Diana, in a picture he had seen at Bologna, wherein the artist had chosen to envelop in ghastly moonlight the countenance of the mystic goddess.

"Unless I address her at once, these miserable feelings of embarrassment will be ever recurring," was the reflection that darted through the mind of Greville. Hastily approaching her, accordingly he began to pour forth, in a low and inarticulate voice, his regrets at hearing from Monsieur de St. Sévron such unfavourable tidings of the health of the Marquis de Rostanges.

"My brother-in-law is indeed in a melancholy condition," replied Eugénie firmly. "His sole consolation is derived from the assiduity of his wife and the devotedness of his friends; of whom none more kind, none more valued, than Monsieur de St. Sévron."

Greville fancied he could detect an inflexion of triumph in her tone, as she vaunted the virtues of her husband.

"It is only to-night that I became aware of his illness," stammered Greville, as if in excuse for his negligence.

"Which is, however, of such permanence," replied Eugénie, coldly, "that your statement serves to prove you have never inquired after him of our mutual friends. The Marquis has a better memory," she continued, almost sternly. "On arriving in Paris, he made instant inquiries after the Lord Greville whom the papers announced as dining at the Château, and was eager that Sophie should endeavour to obtain your address."

Greville attempted some inexplicit declaration of gratitude.

"We women are perhaps more resentful of neglects," added Eugénie, with a scornful smile; "for my sister refused to write to you till you deigned to afford us some token of your being in Paris."

Satisfied that both Sophie and the bride were aware of the motive of his avoidance

of their society, Greville felt resentful of the persecution of these accusations. He bowed coldly, as if to put an end to the conversation; when something of relenting in the eyes of Eugénie,—something of more feminine grace betrayed in the turn of her classical head, served to rivet him to the spot. The Eugénie of old times was before him; as when, moved either to anger or terror by his devotion to her sister, she used suddenly to bend her gaze upon his face, as if to penetrate his projects,—nay, sometimes as if to implore his forbearance. Lovely as he had thought her, even then, in the midst of his infatuation, she had never appeared so passing fair as now, when secret sorrow of some nature or other had impressed its grave signet on her brow. Either the affliction impending over the Marchioness, or some profound regret, had evidently saddened her bridal hours. Even her dress appeared to Greville little in accordance with the brilliancy of her new position.—No dis-

monds sparkled amid her glossy hair.—No bracelets encircled the arms which might have served as models to the sculptor.—Simple as ever, and as ever of purest white, there was nothing of the Comtesse de St. Sévron in the robe whose folds hung round her like the drapery of some antique statue.

Greville felt inexpressibly gratified by finding so little of her new condition announced in her dress and deportment. As an excuse for loitering near her, he hazarded some general remarks upon the beauty of the ball.

"I am no great judge of such scenes!" she replied, with a vague smile. "You may remember of old that I never shared my sister's passionate love of dancing. To-night, I came hither in compliance with the earnest desire of Sidonie and Monsieur de St. Sévron."

The name, pronounced by her lips, grated upon the ear of Greville; more especially as she gave it utterance, with the unconcern of perfect familiarity.

"But I am anxious to get away," she added. "I want sadly to be at home again.—We are waiting only for Sidonie to fulfil two or three engagements."

"Do you not dance, then?" inquired Greville, with a degree of carelessness that ought to have apprised her he spoke without personal projects.

"Certainly not to-night," she replied, with a sudden alteration of manner. Then, as if fearing he might be pained by so abrupt a mode of intimating that it would be useless to ask the honour of her hand, she added, "The precarious condition of my brother-in-law renders it disagreeable to me to join in such diversions."

Yet half-an-hour afterwards, as he stood conversing with Madame de Kersakoff in the supper-room, Ferdinand de Valsan suddenly joined them from the dance, full of raptures concerning a valse he had been enjoying with Madame de St. Sévron!—Greville could scarcely

conceal his disgust at her hypocrisy or inconsistency.

"You have actually been dancing with Madame de St. Sévron?" he inquired, half-aside, of his friend, as though the fact needed confirmation.

"If you were not in the crowd of those who stood by to applaud our performance, I am sorry for you," replied Valsan, passing his hand through his curls, to the detriment of the second pair of *gants paille* with which he had done honour to the ball. "I flatter myself, *mon cher*, there are not *many* such valseurs in Paris as myself and Madame de St. Sévron!—Madame de St. Pierre is lighter in hand, but she cannot *balancer sur place* with the tact and nicety of the *charmante mariée*."

Repeatedly had Greville attempted to defend Valsan from the charge of *fatuité* to which the exquisitism of the young *auditeur* exposed him in the sober official circles that were his natural element. But it was not likely that, afte

this *boutade* he should ever again become the advocate of so inveterate a coxcomb.

"I can only tell you," interrupted Madame de Kersakoff, *trépignant du pied* with impatience of such praises bestowed upon a rival, "that in Vienna or St. Petersburg, where people *do* valse, Madame de St. Sévron would be condemned to *faire tapisserie* throughout the evening.—Nobody would even risk such a partner. Here, you achieve a sort of *sauteuse* which, if you can but contrive to make fast enough, is pronounced to be the perfect *deux temps*. Trust me, there are not six people in Paris who have the most remote idea of it.—Strauss, you know, threw you up in disgust."

"I resign myself to being thrown up in disgust, in company with Madame de St. Sévron," cried Ferdinand, swallowing his third tumbler of lemonade and champagne. "Ah! they are going!—She assured me she had been staying only to keep her engagement with *me*. I must go and help her to find her shawl," cried he,

hurrying off towards the anteroom whither Monsieur and Madame de St. Sévron, accompanied by Sidonie, were directing their steps. Greville presumed it was to Mademoiselle de Chaulieu he must offer his arm; the Count having monopolized that of Eugénie, evidently resolved not to cede his privilege to the favourite partner of his bride.

"They are trying, I really believe, to cry that woman into fashion!" whined Madame de Kersakoff, noting the *empressement* of Ferdinand. "*C'est en pure perte.*—It will never do!—She was designed by nature for a dowdy, and a dowdy she will remain.—No grace,—no *tournure*,—no coquetry,—no anything! You might as well attempt to make a *femme à la mode* out of one of the wicker figures in Giroux's shop!"—

"I do not imagine that Madame de St. Sévron has any ambition to become a *lionne!*" replied Greville, not choosing to hear his own disapprobation expressed by any other person;

"but not even the devotion of a *prétentieux* like Ferdinand de Valsan will prevent the world from seeing in her one of its fairest ornaments."

Had not Madame de Kersakoff been aware that, in the estimation of the *crême de la crême*, Lord Greville stood supreme, and that he might become the hero of almost any romance he chose to call into action, his *mal adresse* in entertaining her with praises of a rival, would probably have exiled him for ever from her good graces. As it was, she merely shrugged her shoulders, with a secret ejaculation concerning the originality of the English.

"Come into the ball-room, and see the mazurka," said she, appropriating his arm as unceremoniously as she would have done that of an arm-chair, as the piquant measures of the national dance resounded from the distant orchestra. "There, you will see it accomplished in a somewhat different style from the hoydening of the Faubourg!—Look at Madame Charles de B——, look at our pretty little Madame de

B——, and render justice to my countrywomen! The most agreeable women in Paris this winter are all Russians. We are more frank, more cordial, than Frenchwomen,—more obliging,—more true.—Many people praise the vivacity of the Parisians;—for my part, I find them *vapoureuses* and affected.—Nothing can be more dawling,—nothing more *fainéaute!*—Whereas the Russians—"

"Leave me one single little word of praise to utter in their honour!"—cried Greville, placing her in an ostensible position in the ball-room, in hopes that some inveterate mazurka-dancer might disencumber him of one who, though light as a feather, was so heavy a burthen. "One little word of praise, in which to concentrate a world of admiration."

Trusting that his gratitude to Prince P——, who soon afterwards snatched the little Countess into the round of the mazurka, was not unbecomingly manifested, Greville profited by his

leisure to contemplate the only ball-room he had seen during the winter, unencumbered by the ungainly crowd of deputies besetting the royal and ministerial fêtes. The sallow but distinguished faces of the *monde diplomatique* appeared like a spiritualization of society, after the hard features of the hard-working politicians of the reformed parliament of France.

Familiarized to Madame de Kersakoff's hourly whinings concerning the delicacy of her health, and to find her, morning after morning, unequal to the task of walking from one room into another, Greville had flattered himself, when compelled to escort her to the ball, that a very short enjoyment of its pleasures would suffice. But to his amazement, valse succeeded contredanse, and mazurka valse, and the tiny Countess remained untirable. When the cotillon struck up the signal for the retreat of cross chaperons, maternal or marital, she was one of the first to take posses-

sion of an arm-chair, with the Prince de Chaulieu by her side;—prepared with all the little whips and stings of coquetry peculiar to that piece of grown-up child's play. Yet Greville reconciled himself without much difficulty to his duties. With unaccountable weakness, he felt as if retiring to rest would bring him nearer to the hour of rising, and the dreaded moment of repairing to the Hotels de Rostanges and de St. Sévron.

Even the longest cotillon, however, will have an end. The strifes and envyings of the various couples seated round the room were successively appeased by some act of cotillon vengeance. The *chaine* was romped through at last;—the strain, so often seeming to die away to be so often renewed, experienced a sudden death;—the weary musicians were released; and the panting crowd hurried into the refreshment room to await the arrival of trays of *bouillon*, indispensable to a French ball. Nothing re-

mained for Greville but a night of broken rest, as a preliminary to a day of unbroken care.

Painful as were his anticipations, he had, however, insufficiently prepared himself for the overpowering emotions that beset him on the threshold of the Hotel de St. Sévron on the following morning. The porter's intimation that "Monsieur le Comte was gone out," and "Madame la Comtesse not yet visible," scarcely sufficed to the restoration of his self-command.

As he drove rapidly off towards the Rue St. Dominique, he recalled to mind how, on occasion of his last visit, he had been stopped by Giacchimo with tidings of his mother's dangerous illness. Could the lapse of less than two years have effected so complete a revolution in his character, that he now remained, week after week, in contented ignorance concerning the welfare of Lady Greville, while the mere consciousness of approaching the Hotel de St. Sév-

ron sufficed to agitate every pulse of his throbbing heart?—

On sending in his name to the *concierge* of the Hotel de Rostanges, he was instantly admitted; nay, the venerable servants waiting in the vestibule, by whom he was conducted, *à pas de loup*, through the suite of rooms, seemed almost disposed to salute him with a friendly greeting.

"How is the Marquis to-day, Baptiste?" inquired he of the old maître d'hotel, by way of marking his recognition of a former favourite.

"Rather better than worse, milor," replied the old man, in a cautious whisper. "The Comte de St. Sévron is with him. Monsieur le Marquis is always the better for the visits of the Comte de St. Sévron."

There is something peculiarly depressing in the stealthy pace and subdued voices announcing the presence of sickness and danger in a mansion wherein we are accustomed to the predominance of cheerfulness and health. Instead

of flinging open, as of old, the double *battans* of the saloon for the admittance of an honoured guest, Baptiste requested milor to wait an instant till his arrival was announced to the invalid; and as the old man cautiously opened a single *battant*, Greville saw him stoop and whisper to Madame de Rostanges, who was seated near the *bergère* in which reclined the emaciated figure of the invalid. But he saw no more. Tears obscured his eyes as they rested upon the careworn face and wasted form of the gentle Sophie. The involuntary gesture which marked her anxiety lest the arrival of a stranger should occasion a pernicious shock to the sufferer, contained an epitome of her history.

In another moment, Greville was seated in the chair placed for him beside the *bergère* of the Marquis, whose burning but attenuated hand lay folded in his own. No need to express sympathy,—no need to avow contrition!—The most careless observer must have perceived that the countenance inclining over that thin

tremulous hand, was concealing tears of intense emotion.

"*Mon enfant,*" faltered the scarcely less agitated Marquis, (rendered conscious of the half century's distance existing between their ages, by the approach of the last but best instructor,)—"*mon enfant,—vous êtes en retard!*—Had you delayed your kindness a short time longer, you would have found only the old man's empty chair!"

Greville replied by a more fervent pressure of the hand about to withdraw itself from his grasp.

"Sophie!—have you not a word of greeting for your old friend?"—resumed the Marquis, addressing his feeble accents to his wife.

"I have already assured Lord Greville of my satisfaction at seeing him here again," replied Madame de Rostanges, confirming by her coldness the distance she had established between them by the formality of her reception; imme-

dately recommencing with St. Sévron the conversation his arrival had interrupted.

"You are come, I trust, to pass the winter with us?"—anxiously demanded the invalid.

"An urgent matter of business brought me to Paris,"—stammered Greville, labouring to recover his self-possession. "But it is now so nearly completed, that I purpose returning to England in a few days."

"No, no,—I cannot spare you yet!"—exclaimed the Marquis, turning towards him a face on whose paleness a feeble smile played like a mournful gleam of winter sunshine.—"You must stay and see the last of the old man. You must attend me to the church-yard.—I cannot spare you yet."

"You accuse Lord Greville of having retarded his visit, my dear Rostanges,"—interposed St. Sévron, who, through his conversation with the Marchioness overheard every syllable that was passing,—"and now, you seem deter-

mined to drive him away.—Don't expect us to come and sit with you, my good friend, if you torture us by such painful allusions."

"I would fain prevent your *feeling* them painful,"—murmured the invalid.—"I wish you to contemplate my end with the same cheerful resignation I do myself. Surrounded by those who are dear to me,—soothed by the devoted attendance of the best of wives on my passage from a happy mortal state to a still happier immortal,—what right have I to repine at having reached the term of existence?—Think what my life has been for five years past!—Consider what intense domestic happiness has replaced the vain ambitions of public life, and the delusions of pleasure!—But for the warning reprehensions of sickness, I had perhaps so anchored myself to the joys of this world, that even the promises of eternity might not have reconciled me to the change!—All has been mercifully ordained. — Weaned by slow degrees from

earthly attachments, I have been summoned so gently that I have learned to contemplate my end as though it were that of another;—grateful for every added day,—yet humbly resigned that each should be the last."

"If Eugénie were here, she would not allow you to exhaust yourself thus," cried St. Sévron. "But it is the error of that best of wives you praise so highly, to let you do all you choose,—knowing you choose to do everything that is wrong."

"Patience, patience, *gros Papa!*"—remonstrated the Marquis, attempting a playful gesture of the hand. "You have reprimanded me enough for to-day. I promise to offend no more. I was anxious only to convince this fellow, whom I used to love as a boy of my own, that the dying man for whom I see he feels such earnest pity is scarcely an object of commiseration. — And now, dear Greville,—tell me!—what was this matter of

business to which you allude?—Anything in which our poor assistance might have been available?"—

Succinctly, and with careful avoidance of all details likely to excite the shattered nerves of the invalid, Greville related the history of Anton' Amazzi, and the success which had crowned his interposition with government in behalf of the unfortunate Corsican.

"You always described your yacht to us, my dear lord, as such a marvel of order and subordination!" said the old man, after listening to his narrative. "Do you remember, Sophie, how you and your sister used to delight in mounting him upon his hobby and worming out of him the secrets of his Eastern and Grecian adventures?—I recollect, Greville, as if it were yesterday, your sitting between them one moonlight night, yonder under the acacia-tree, (of which the dried pods are now rustling so mournfully in the northern wind,) describing

the Grotto of Antiparos, and the Haidee who served as the guide of your adventures."

"For Heaven's sake, don't get him on the chapter of his travels!"—gaily interrupted St. Sévron, "or he will be coming cataracts and pyramids over us, till we are overwhelmed like Pharaoh and all his host."

"Envious man!—did we not listen patiently last year to your Scottish adventures?" replied the Marquis, in the same tone.

"The more indulgently, perhaps," observed Madame de Rostanges, "because, after the overacted enthusiasm of Monsieur de Cerny and Frederic de St. Pierre, St. Sévron's calmer mood of admiration restored us to conceit with ourselves."

"You were disappointed, then, in England?"—demanded Greville, turning towards St. Sévron, and hoping to generalise the conversation.

"On the contrary, my expectations were not

exorbitant, and completely satisfied. I respected, in the little busy English ant-hill, its industry, legislation, and intelligence. Refinement of taste or vastness of grandeur were not what I came to seek."

"I am too slightly acquainted with my native country to attempt her eulogium," replied Greville. "While her title to solids remains undisputed, let who will quarrel with her superficials!"

"I expected no less of you, my dear lord,—albeit (*soit dit en passant*) such moderation be a rare merit among your countrymen. Next to the Americans, your nationality is the most thin-skinned in the world. You will not hear it hinted that you have not achieved perfection,—which effectually bars out all prospect of improvement."

"Like other chidden children, we rebel against the teacher, but amend our fault," said Greville.

"How is it possible to amend a fault when, like the deaf adder, you refuse to hear the voice of the charmer by whom it is revealed? In that respect, you pay the penalty of your insular position, — the source of so many triumphs. Your island is a *cul-de-sac*,—you lead to nothing!—Paris lies on the great highway of Europe; hourly traversed by foreigners of all nations and qualifications, each of whom flings a stone at one or other of our national abuses. Our language being cosmopolitan, we are compelled to listen to the sarcasms of either hemisphere. The foreigners who find their way into England, on the contrary, are either poor refugees, as meek as pauperism can make them; or royal fashionables, who visit Epsom, Melton, and Newmarket, but return without having been within leagues of Birmingham and Liverpool, Oxford and Cambridge, or forming the most remote guess at your institutions."

"We are beginning to lead to something,"

remarked Greville, cheerfully. "The establishment of steam navigation on the Atlantic, attracts a wholly different class of strangers across the ant-hill."

"So much the better, *mon cher*,—so much the better!—If travel tend to liberalize individuals,—an influx of travellers is necessary to render the advantage national. The fault I find with English society, is the circumscription of its philosophy. Don't exclaim!—I do not dispute your foresightedness in science or ethics. I dare say you discover more planets than other people; and by the intensity of your penal legislation, you have perhaps invented a crime or two. But in matters of less import, you are sadly in want of spectacles. In matters of less import, the vista is bounded on every side by the narrow limits of your insularity. You are bitter enemies to innovation. Your moral custom-house is terribly intent upon imposing duties on foreign imports. You would not,

perhaps, put Galileo to death; but we have all beheld your press attempt the lapidation of originators of systems eventually adopted by the nation."

"We are certainly opposed to unnecessary reforms,"—Greville was beginning—

"Admire the leaven of Toryism breaking out in the hereditary peer!" interrupted St. Sévron,—whose object in the discussion was to divert the attention of the Marquis from his own ailments. "All English lords ought to be inoculated with it in their infancy, to secure having it in a mild way; for, taken after one-and-twenty, the mark becomes indelible. That clap-trap word, 'the wisdom of our ancestors,' is safer as a rattle in the hands of a child, than as a sledge-hammer in the hands of a man."

"I don't mean to be affronted," interposed Greville, laughing,—"and therefore hope that you don't mean to be too saucy."

"The English Tory has not much to fear from the legitimists of the Faubourg!" observed the invalid.

"You have seen something now, my dear Greville," added the Count, after stooping to adjust a cushion under the feet of the Marquis, "of the various shades of society in Paris.—Admit that the ready colloquiality of my countrymen tends to the enlargement of their ideas and extension of their views? To produce a spark, flint must strike against steel; whereas your learned recluses, buried in their quarry, lend little aid toward the enlightenment of mankind."

"Dreading, perhaps, the fearful enlightenment produced by a general conflagration!"—added Greville, almost nettled.

"A genuine John Bullism,—the first I ever heard you utter!"—cried St. Sévron.—"Excellent, as an aphorism, for the leading article of an unliberal or illiberal journal;—excellent as a pebble-stone in the sling with which your

political shepherd attacks the champion of the Philistines;—but unworthy the scholarly lips of an Oxonian fresh from the plain of Marathon and the schools of Athens. By the way, did you, in the East, encounter our excellent Lamartine, who must have been tottering there in his go-cart, about the same time as yourself?"

Greville replied in the negative, and without any expression of regret.

"I have outlived the influence of poetry," said he, "and not yet achieved that of politics. Lamartine appears to me equally feeble as a poet and politician; especially since he has taken the affairs of the East under his protection, much on the grounds of the school-girl who affected agony at the invasion of Spain, because her cousin played on the Spanish guitar?"—

"I agree with you, that the East deserves better of us than to be namby-pambyed away by poeticising politicians, or vulgarized by stock-jobbing speculators," cried St. Sévron, earnestly.

"One might almost fancy the tortures of our martyrs atoned, by the excruciation of treaties and protocols with which we are tormenting the last moments of Paganism."

"Hush, hush!—I hear the light steps of Eugénie traversing the drawing-room," exclaimed Madame de Rostanges.—"My sister interdicts politics as fatal to the atmosphere of a sick-room," she continued, turning towards Greville, who had abruptly risen at the announcement, and was already taking leave of the invalid, with promises to return on the morrow.

A cold salutation was exchanged on the threshold of the saloon between the departing guest and the beautiful woman, advancing with easy dignity to offer her morning consolations to her brother-in-law. In another moment, the door had closed upon Lord Greville.

CHAPTER VII.

Avec ses trésors je bouillerais cent familles.
MICHEL RAYMOND.

GRENVILLE was stung to the heart by the scornful coldness of the sisters. If conscious of a fault in having presumed on the imputed levity of her nature, to address Madame de Rosanges with insulting declarations, the error had been long ago forgiven;—while the still deeper offence of ingratitude towards Eugénie, was effaced by her happy union with another.

It was unworthy of them, therefore, to pursue

him with tardy retribution, as well as unaccordant with the indulgent forbearance imparting a peculiar charm to the society of the French. Impossible to be less vindictive;—impossible to be more *facile à vivre.* Unless among the natives of their meridional provinces, nothing so rare as an act of revenge. The passions of the Parisians are obliterated by their vices;—as the surface of a field of standing corn evinces little token of the furrows beneath.

"There is something almost ungenerous in the sense of superiority displayed in their deportment!" cried Greville, as he drove impetuously from the Rue St. Dominique towards the desolate Boulevart des Invalides, for the assuagement of his irritation. It needed all the feminine devotedness of Sophie,—all the denial conveyed in the career of her wedded life to the aspersions with which foreigners opprobriate all Parisiennes of high caste established by a *mariage de convenance,* to leave him in charity, even with her virtues.

"I hope you were coming to leave a card at my house?" cried the Duchesse de St. Pierre, suddenly stopping her splendid equipage and confronting the bleak air of a wintry day to accost him.—"Not for *me!*—Don't fancy I am in the habit of exacting ceremonious devotions. But my mother, having heard of your being in Paris, has once or twice inquired why you no longer frequent our Faubourg Society. It would vex me to be obliged to own that you like us less than formerly."

"I will do myself the honour of writing my name for Madame de Rostanges," replied Greville, touching his hat by way of adieu to the lovely *femme* of the Rue de Varennes.

"No such thing!—Come to-night to her Bostoo, and you will please her twenty times as much. We have no little flirting Russian Countesses for you; but the Clermonts and St. Sévrons will probably look in."

Lord Greville of course drove straight to the Hotel de St. Pierre, to leave cards for the Duke

and Duchess, as well as for the Dowager, so as to exempt himself from the necessity of keeping his engagement. His last appearance in the circle of the venerable Marchioness de Rostanges had left too painful a trace upon his memory!—and having determined to limit his stay in Paris to a day or two, there was less occasion for his observance of the strictness of Faubourg etiquette. But for an engagement of the most peremptory nature, he would have quitted Paris that very evening.

He felt it incumbent upon him to appear at the ball of the Duchess of Orleans: the moderate dimensions of the Prince Royal's apartments in the Pavillon de Marsan rendering it impossible for the absence of an invited guest to escape notice. He had already adventured a careless inquiry of St. Sévron whether they should meet at the ball; the Count's earnest ejaculation of "God forbid!" serving at once to remind him that Eugénie, by her marriage,

"I hope you ... lists of pure Carlism, and my house ... at least free from the gêne of suddenly ... If equally assured that the pretty confounded diamonds of Madame de Kersakoff across ... spared from a fête peculiarly conse- in ... to the claims of brilliancy and beauty, he ... have assumed his uniform with almost ... expectation of a pleasant evening.

Unembarrassed by the peculiar ties which beset every movement of the King, even in the trifling details of hospitality, the Duke and Duchess of Orleans, on pretext of want of accommodation, have assumed the envied privilege of assembling round them only the élite of the great bodies of the state; completing their circle with all that is most distinguished of the foreign nobility visiting Paris. The peculiarly gracious manners of the Duchess, which, though taxed by the Faubourg with the banality of German courtliness, are essentially French and French of the best order, have excused,

even to the ultra liberals, who still demand conciliation in Paris, some return towards the etiquettes of the *ancien régime;* and an *entrée* to the fêtes of the Pavillon Marsan is consequently almost as much in request as when, in his bachelorhood, a smile from the Prince Royal sufficed to confer a diploma of beauty.

"*Faisons notre entrée ensemble!*" said Achille de Cerny, who happened to ascend the staircase at the same moment with Lord Greville. "We are in good time; for behold Monsieur de Rambuteau—the most punctual of men and administrators, who gets through twice as much business while other people are asleep as other people when awake, and four times as much business when other people are awake as any four of us put together,—a hint I afford you, *en passant,* to explain the common belief that *ce bon Préfet* is ubiquitous; or, as one of your Irish senators Irishly observed, that, like a bird, he manages to be in two places at once. I left him just now at the Minister of Finance's,—

buried, as I thought, under a wagon-load of the arguments of that weighty statesman. But, behold, he is risen from the dead, and is here before me!"—

Though Greville had offered no interruption to Cerny's chattering, not a syllable reached his ear. As they slowly ascended the illuminated staircase, his eyes were fixed upon a party of ladies who were disengaging themselves from their shawls in the gallery.

Could there exist in Paris *two* such nobly-proportioned forms as the one before him and the bride of Tristan de St. Sévron?—Were there *two* women who ventured to encircle their marble brows with a simple braid of raven hair, like the beautiful creature who now stood patiently waiting till her coquettish companions had smoothed their ruffled plumes, preparatory to their trying entrée into the presence of royalty?

"I could have sworn that was Madame de St. Sévron who went in just now!" said he, incoherently addressing his companion.

"Madame de St. Sévron at the Duke of Orleans's ball?—My dear friend, the stones of the Pavillon would rise and prate of her whereabout. Reflect that her mother was *dame d'honneur* to Madame!"

"All that sort of prejudice seems to be so rapidly disappearing."—

"Among those too young to have taken a part in public life before the accession of the present dynasty," replied Cerny. "*My* people, for instance, are legitimists; but I was the class-fellow of the Duc de Chartres, and loved him as much as I respect the courage and talents of Louis Philippe. But St. Sévron!—St. Sévron, who followed Charles X. to Rambouillet!—St. Sévron, who made a pilgrimage to Goritz!—St. Sévron, the nephew of the Duc de Monthémont!"

"Nevertheless," interrupted Greville, catching sight, through the doors of the antechamber, of the interior of the ballroom, "I swear to you

that Madame de St. Sévron is here! Look!—next to the lady in a brocaded dress!"

"*Mon cher*, you are demented!—*That* is Madame de Senneval, wife of one of his Royal Highness's *officiers d'ordonnance*."

"On the other side of Madame de Senneval,—to the right!"

"In the white dress, with bouquets of natural camellias?—Where have you been dining?—Has the Madeira of the club gone too hard with you? *That* is Mademoiselle de Nangis.—She accompanied Madame de Senneval, who is related, you know, to the Rostanges people."

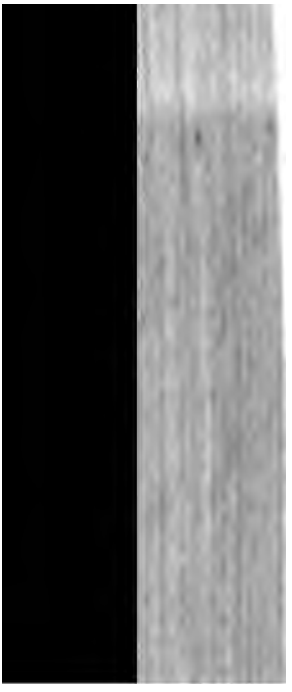
"Mademoiselle de Nangis?"—

"Come, come!—don't pretend to mystify me in this fashion. I saw you drive out of the courtyard, in the Rue St. Dominique, only this morning.—*You must* have known she was to be here.—*Mais silence!*—The Duke and his brothers are approaching."

If the coherency of poor Greville had ap-

peared questionable to Achille de Cerny, what had not the Princes a right to infer from the extraordinary equivocations and contradictions with which he acknowledged their courteous greeting!—In reply to the Duke of Orleans's questions, he said he was to leave Paris on the morrow, on his way to Marseilles;—in reply to the Duc de Nemours, that he should be in London in a day or two, for the meeting of parliament;—and if he did not declare to the Prince de Joinville that he was about to sail for Kamskatcha in a whaler, it was by some miraculous interposition of common sense. He neither recollected where he was, nor whom he was addressing.

When the Princes had successively glided off, leaving him free for the prosecution of his inquiries, Cerny was no longer beside him.—In what direction was he gone?—And how might he venture to accost any other person with the puerile questions of—"Is Eugénie de Nangis still unmarried? and who, in the name of all that is



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The music now struck
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"After all," was his final reflection, as he watched the chaste movements of Eugénie, who, both for her beauty's sake and as dancing opposite to the Princesse Clémentine, attracted general attention,—"after all, what should I gain by learning that she is free?—Would the obstacle the less exist which renders our union impossible?—As much divided from her as if she were in truth the wife of St. Sévron, my former repinings would only recur with redoubled violence!"—

And straightway accosting Ferdinand de Valsan, who stood watching the dancers, braced into a puppet by the old-fashioned formality of his auditor's uniform, he suddenly inquired the name of his favourite partner, the pretty bride of the Faubourg.

"You must have a short memory," replied Valsan, shewing his pearly teeth. "The pretty bride is Madame la Comtesse de St. Sévron."

"Madame la Comtesse de St. Sévron, *née*—" persisted Greville, with ill-assumed unconcern.

"*Née* Chaulieu,—sister of the Prince de Chaulieu, who was nearly killed at the last steeple chase."

Greville had no leisure to remark the curious modes afforded by the phases of modern society for acquiring fame or notoriety! He was occupied in reviling the stupidity displayed in the strange series of misconceptions in which he had involved himself!—

"I am no dancer, as I need not remind you," he whispered, abruptly addressing Mademoiselle de Nangis, the moment she was brought back by her partner, Count Rodolph, to the care of her chaperon, who had taken her place on the sofa, preserving, as is customary throughout the evening at French balls, a place beside her for her charge. And there was such a sudden outburst of joyousness in his looks, such a tremulousness of delight mingled with the frankness of his address, that Eugénie saw in a moment some unusual occurrence had taken place.

"Do you fancy I expect you to offer your-

self to me as a partner?"—she replied, her own reserve giving way under the influence of his sudden effusion.

"I wished to excuse my presumption in entreating you at least to accept my arm when Madame de Senneval repairs to the refreshment-room?"—

"I scarcely think she will leave her place,—certainly not till the royal family are moving," replied Eugénie.

Undismayed by this evasive answer, Greville loitered near the spot; and when the Queen and Duchess of Orleans rose to repair to the second dancing-room, in order to keep the guests equally distributed between both, Lord Greville again pressed forward with an offer of his services. But the young chaperon was engaged to dance, and had no thoughts of venturing into the refreshment-room.

Mademoiselle de Nangis, however, seemed to compassionate the evident desire of Greville to approach her more nearly. "When Ma-

[redacted] as Sommers begins to waltz," said she, "we will summ up and look at the dancing. Do you remember how, in my rash girlhood, I used to shock the poor dear old Princesse de Chemise by loving our French anthems against waltzing?—I have since given up in despair what I believe I only attempted in consistency."—

"You relieve me from my sole regret at my want of skill as a waltzer," observed [redacted], lowering his voice, and gratefully accepting the arm which, on the first signal from the orchestra, she passed within his own. "From your manner of alluding to the Princesse, I infer that she is no more?"

"You are ignorant that Sidonie was left to my mother-in-law's guardianship,—residing with us at Les Ormes from the period of becoming an orphan?—It was there her marriage with our friend St. Sevrin was arranged."—

"Were I to acknowledge the full extent of my ignorance or misunderstanding concern-

ing St. Sévron and his marriage, [I could not hope you would believe me!"—cried he. "Yet who might not believe anything, after seeing him transfer his affections from—"

"*Assez, assez!*"—interposed Eugénie, forestalling the intended compliment. "St. Sévron had little share in the transfer. We were fortunate in persuading him to secure the happiness of his cousin, my friend Sidonie, who had been long attached to him, and will make him as good a wife as Sophie has made to his poor friend."

"For *his* sake may it prove so!" exclaimed Greville, earnestly. "But I must be excused from complimenting him on the exchange. It is, however, scarcely to be wondered at that the friends of the Marquis de Rostanges should be readily induced into matrimony."

"His friends, if gifted with common sense, must be aware that women like Sophie are rare in the world," rejoined Eugénie, with still warmer earnestness. "Even you, who are well ac-

quainted with my sister,—even I, who have lived my whole happy life in her company, — might still find cause for admiration in the indifference to self which marks every action of her life.—People sometimes enlarge to me upon the sacrifice she makes in abstaining from scenes like these, to become the nurse of her infirm husband! — Far greater would be the sacrifice, were she compelled to leave him to the care of servants. You can form no idea of his attachment, his gratitude, his appreciation of her excellencies! If such a thing as love exist on earth, it must surely consecrate a tie such as binds those twain to each other."

Greville could not refrain from a slight pressure of the arm linked within his own, as he listened to these allusions. But Eugénie had every excuse for attributing the movement to the intensity of the throng crowding round the waltzers.

"Your little friend, Madame de Kersakoff, attracts so much attention by her incomparable

waltzing," said she, "that we shall be crushed to death if we remain among the spectators."

Though vexed at this summary dismissal, Greville's heart bounded within him at the expression, "Your little friend, Madame de Kersakoff." Eugénie had clearly watched his proceedings at their first meeting; or, if related to her by others, they had retained some hold on her recollection. If he dared but hope that she had experienced a moment's jealousy of Madame de Kersakoff!

Madame de Senneval, who, as a *lionne*, was considerably in request as a partner, now returned to her seat. But as she was not likely long to retain her post of *surveillance*, Greville, happier than he had felt at any moment since he entered Paris, or rather, at any moment since he quitted it, stationed himself in a doorway commanding the place occupied by Mademoiselle de Nangis, and had the satisfaction of seeing her refuse, in succession, the most distinguished partners in the room. Several gene-

ral officers approached her, with the kindest inquiries after the health of the Marquis; and in reply to these, her manner was tempered with a degree of deference very different from her style of addressing the *lions*, native or foreign, who attempted to dazzle her with the splendour of their uniforms and the *fatuité* of their smiles. Much as Greville was impressed by the superior address of Frenchwomen in general, and Sophie and her sister in particular, as contrasted with the half-shy, half-proud reserve of the English, which, even when worn away by much converse with the world, leaves behind a frank abruptness far from fascinating to strangers,—never had he been so struck as that evening; or, perhaps, never had Eugénie been actuated in his presence by such an inward sense of happiness as that which now lent colour to her cheek and conciliation to her manners. Every one hailed the change in her appearance by the usual phrase of society,—that "Mademoiselle de Nangis was *en triomphe*."

But if others were captivated by the charm of her radiant countenance and gracious deportment, what was *he* who had some right to arrogate to his own influence the working of the spell?—At the close of that brilliant ball, she accepted a second time his arm on their way to the carriage; and as the delays consequent upon the simultaneous breaking up of royal balls kept them waiting nearly an hour for the announcement of the carriage, a few of those detached exclamations which convey so much more than the common course of conversation, betrayed to each, the happy state of feeling of the other.

"What a charming ball!"—Ferdinand de Valsan observed to Lord Greville, as he swept by triumphantly, with Madame de Kersakoff, whose glittering diadem and gloomy face seemed at that moment singularly at variance.

"The only pleasant fête I have been at this year!" was his rejoinder;—a rejoinder attri-

buted by the vain Valsan to the admiration conceded to Greville's personal attractions by those to whom he devoted so little homage in return.

"I came hither with very little expectation of being amused," Greville had heard Eugénie reply, on the other hand, to the interrogations of one of her numerous *adorateurs*. "My sister insisted on my accompanying Madame de Senneval. Even till the last moment, I resisted.—But how shall I sufficiently thank her, on my return, for having procured me so charming an evening!"—

A few minutes before, Mademoiselle de Nangis, on missing her bouquet, now withered and faded, had searched for it more eagerly than comported with her habitual serenity.

"My dear Eugénie, I shall certainly interrogate Madame Adde concerning this precious bouquet!" cried Madame de Senneval. "I noticed its beauty,—(*pompon* camellias of every shade!) and accused you of extravagance.—

I *now* begin, my dear, to accuse you of coquetry. It was clearly the gift of some one extraordinarily dear to you!"

"You have guessed right," she replied;—"it was the gift of poor Rostanges,—who, in the midst of his sufferings, was thoughtful enough to send to the Madeleine and order it for me. Frankly, however, I am desirous to preserve it rather as a memorial of the pleasures I have enjoyed here, than of his kindness, which is demonstrated in too many ways to require a memento."

No wonder that Greville, who, returning hastily from a pretended search after the withered flowers, overheard this flattering avowal, found it difficult to retire to rest on his return from the ball.

It was his custom, as it is that of most *élégants*, to prepare himself for the land of dreams with a cigar. The etherial beings deified by the idolatry of society, little imagine, while listening to the impassioned whispers

of their adorers, how often their charms are recalled to mind,—their gentle words passed in review,—their graceful movements reconsidered,—through circling clouds of a genuine Havannah!—Enrolled in a comfortable dressing-gown, ensconced in an easy chair, encapped in an embroidered calotte, (the purchase of Abdallah in the bazaar at Cairo,) Greville, with an excellent cigar in his mouth, and Eugénie, not de Sévron, but de Nangis, in his heart of hearts, felt himself, that night, pretty nearly the happiest of mankind!—

Though situated much as when, on his arrival in Paris, he pronounced himself to be "the most wretched of the human race," his recent experience of a yet darker despair made it suffice for his peace of mind that Eugénie was still free,—that she had even persisted, in spite of all persuasions, in retaining her freedom; and that he had some pretext for believing himself the object of her preference.

The sense of happiness brought with it, as in

all hearts nobly constituted, a renewal of the sense of duty and affection. Greville blushed to recollect how cruelly, during his recent season of despondency, he had neglected his mother! On poor Lady Greville, he had been gratuitously inflicting the pangs to which he was himself a victim.

Many weeks had elapsed since he addressed a line to the Abbey. He had abstained from writing, chiefly lest he should excite her anxieties by the knowledge that he was in Paris; intending to communicate, on his return to Marseilles, the peculiar circumstances which compelled him to visit the French capital. Apprehensive she might fancy he was renewing his intimacy with the Rostanges family, he remained studiously silent during his estrangement from them, though the news of Eugénie's supposed marriage would have brought a close to the cares of Lady Greville. And now, oh! contradiction of human nature,—now that the mischief was again impending,—the danger again imminent,—he re-

solved to write to her before he slept!—In the overflowing of his joy, he longed to address the only human being who sympathized, heart and soul, in his joys and sorrows.—

Greville had, however, another object.—He wrote, not only to communicate the welcome news that his health was improved, and his spirits improving, but to throw himself on the mercy of the Countess.

"I do not ask you to relent in my favour," said he. "Your world of England has for me an existence so unreal, that I must not pretend to depreciate the importance of public opinion, which, with my parents, has maintained such paramount force. But I implore you,—by all your tenderness lavished upon me in my infancy,—by your sufferings for my sake,—by your trust in my affection,—empower me to exonerate myself in the estimation of Sophie and her sister by an explanation of the peculiar circumstances forbidding me to claim the hand of Mademoiselle de Nangis! Suffer me to

confide in *her*, as you have confided in *me*. Trust to her prudence, mother—trust to her honour; but do not compel me to appear cold and ungrateful when my heart is overflowing with tenderness and love. Did you but know her, were you only able to appreciate the nobleness of her character, (how different from the pitiful worldliness of those you have sometimes pointed out to my preference!) you would admit her title to our confidence.

"I await your answer to this application with earnest anxiety. Fear nothing from my rashness.—Till I receive your sanction, my lips are sealed.—Hard as it may be to restrain the avowal of my attachment, now that circumstances have betrayed me once more into association with those so dear to me, I renew my solemn engagement to secresy, till your kindness shall decree my exemption. Do not, I beseech you, dearest mother, unreasonably prolong my suspense."

CHAPTER VIII.

Of what is the old man thinking
As he leans on his oaken staff?—
HAYNES BAYLEY.

DURING these agitations of the Greville family, the world of gossipry in which the widowed Countess and her son maintained their pristine importance, — still valued at an earldom and forty thousand a-year,—was duly apprized, from time to time, by the same learned authorities which announced Lord Greville's original inauguration at the Clarendon Hotel, that, though contributing little to the pleasures

of society, they had not yet influenced to the gloomy statistics of the bills of mortality.

On occasion of the Countess's visit to town for medical advice, some six months after her son had sailed for the East, the newspapers rang their changes upon her arrival and departure, the motive of her coming and the order of her going, as if intimately in her ladyship's confidence; and from that time till the present, she had figured once a month or so in their records, by assertions of a fact which nobody doubted,—that, "During the absence of the young Earl, the Countess of Greville was still residing at Greville Abbey;"—and eventually by an announcement which few people cared for,—that "The Countess of Greville was about to remove from the family seat in Oxfordshire, to the favourite residence of Torquay, for the benefit of a milder climate."

The Earl, on the other hand, was an immense favourite with the newsmongers, to whom the restlessness of his movements was an annuity.

There was something fanciful and picturesque in the record of his wanderings. Instead of the common-place vulgarity of progresses between Oxfordshire and Torquay, London and Brighton, he was the means of introducing into their columns names and designations savouring of myrrh, aloes, and cassia. When he arrived at Alexandria, they took care, with their usual accuracy, to inform their readers that "The Earl of Greville, in his beautiful yacht the Antelope, had arrived at Smyrna, with the intention of pursuing his researches in Anatolia;"—and while spending the following summer in Egypt, and wintering at Cairo, there was no end to their details of his travels in the Caucasus and his charming winter residence at Damascus. During his illness at the Convent of St. Catherine, "they were under the painful necessity of announcing the dangerous illness of that respected young nobleman the Earl of Greville, who had been landed at Castel-a-mare, under an attack of brain fever."

From these materials, the gossips of Great Britain fabricated a web, the texture of which there was no one to call in question. They decided that the noble minor, having rebelled against the despotism of his mother, was wearing away in foreign travel his impatience of her assumed authority at Greville Abbey. Some went so far as to surmise a *passion malheureuse* for some Coptic beauty, or the daughter of a Levantine consul. Others pronounced the mysteriously unknown nobleman to be a misanthrope, with some tendency towards Moslemism. In certain cerulean coteries, rumours were even circulated that he was to turn out a second Childe Harold; packets having been received by Murray from Alexandria, countersigned by her Majesty's consul for Syria, bearing on the seals an earl's coronet surmounting a stag passant, the crest of the house of Greville.

The great majority, however, more especially that portion of it composed of the squirearchy

of the shire of Oxford, recalled to mind in private and to their neighbours in public, that the Earl, if eccentric, was no worse than his father; that the late Lord Greville, in early youth a libertine, had become sullen and reserved in his maturity,—*comme le diable qui, étant vieux, s'est fait hermite;*—that during his reign Greville Abbey was lost to the county,—that its preserves and gardens were not kept up, as now;—and that, so far from finding fault with the absence of mind of the Countess and body of the Earl, the game was twice as plentiful, and the shooting thrice as come-at-able, now that Dowdeswell was sole lord of the ascendant.

Nor were the tenants less satisfied. Their interests were better cared for by a provident agent than by one who, on reaching his country seat, might perhaps have left his heart behind him at Almack's, and his money at Crockford's.

It is amusing to observe how readily a county appropriates to itself, in the absence of the proprietor, the grandeurs of his seat. During the

sojourn of Lady Greville in Italy, her neighbours had crowded to contemplate the pictures and statues, and enjoy the park and gardens, of the Abbey, till they almost fancied them public property;—talking of them at least as freely as of the National Gallery, and sketching the old oaks, and the deer grouped under them, as they might have done those of Richmond or Windsor.

And now, the system, interrupted by the Countess's return, was renewed in consequence of her sojourn in Devonshire. Squeamington began once more to pour its Sunday crowd into the avenues, to carve true-lovers' knots on the bark of the beech-trees, and sow chicken-bones and crumbs of gingerbread under its spreading cedars. They cared no more for the two Portland-stone rhinoceroses, the supporters of the family arms, figuring over the gateway of the grand entrance, as a token of proprietorship, than for the same emblazonment engraved in the pages of Lodge or Burke; and if Dowdeswell, by advice of Lord Brooks, still issued

cards of permission to fish the waters or shoot in the outlying preserves, it was more to secure the trout and pheasants from bolder depredation, than to serve the electioneering interests of the family. It is true, Squeamington lay too near at hand to admit of the noble house of Greville calling either house or grounds its own; but it was not till Greville betook himself to Jericho beyond Jordan, and his mother to the mild pluviosities of the shire of Devon, that the borough felt certain of having the best of it.—

The market-place and its gossips were a little mortified, however, that Lord Greville afforded them such insufficient data for a novel in three volumes, worthy the greasy, marble-coloured tomes of its half-pay circulating library. All they knew of him, of late years, was his anchorage in harbours with unpronounceable names, and the report that he had been seen in a fez, "surrounded by heathen turks and blackymores, on the top of the purramids of Egypt," his heart hardened, like Pharaoh's, by exposure to so

sultry a sky; and, with the exception of the Earl his father, no one was a greater stranger in the borough than the Right Hon. Hugo, Earl of Greville.

Anodyne, so long as his patroness resided at the Abbey, used to reply with oracular mystery to the inquiries of the Squeamingtonians, whether my lord were ever likely to settle at home like other lords, with a lady as the act directs, and a progressive number of little Grevilles as per law established. But now that the Countess was settled in Devonshire, there was no possibility of pretending to know more on the subject than his neighbours; and he was forced to content himself with the same wish for the new proprietor of the Abbey, as for the walls of his new surgery, — that they might settle speedily, and not prove cracked beyond redemption.

Of all the neighbourhood, however, old Massingberd was most to be pitied. He had lost Lady Greville,—first as a butt, and lastly

as a friend; and had to deplore at once the dissoluteness of his son and the failure of his system. The delight of his life had been, to bring up his boy as a living antithesis to the darling of the Abbey. In whatever particulars Greville was restricted, Fred had been indulged; — wherever Greville had been instructed, Fred was left ignorant. The Countess chose to make a puritan of her son,—the squire was pleased that *his* should be a rake;—so at least it might be inferred from the severity with which the follies of boyhood were checked in Greville, while in Frederick, old Massingberd overlooked even the vices of a man!—

To conceal his faults, when too heinous to be overlooked, the old gentleman had encumbered his estates and inconvenienced his family. Having paid off his daughters' fortunes, he seemed to think himself privileged to render his own and his wife's old age as comfortless as accorded with the exactions of their only son; and now, after all his sacrifices,—cheerful sacrifices—sacrifices

with which he had never reproached the graceless Frederick, — instead of recognising the loving-kindness of such a father, the roué of St. James's Street seemed to think it an infamous thing that his parents should have no more estates left to mortgage!—It was only in patriarchal times that prodigal sons were simple enough to feed on husks. — In our day, the father of the prodigal becomes the swine-herd,— leaving the unrepentant sinner to feast by anticipation on the fatted calf, and pay for it with a post obit!—

All this distressed poor old Massingberd more than he cared to own;—for if his manners were plain, and his sense far from plain, he was a man of feeling and honour. It grieved him sore to find that his son had imposed claims upon him which he was unable to meet; and, above all, that in spite of the unlimited indulgence accorded to his follies, Frederick had played the hypocrite with home far more than the tyran-

nized victim of Greville Abbey. The tough-hearted old squire rejoiced that the graceless fellow kept away from Oxfordshire, *not* lest he should reprove him too hastily, but lest he should again prove weak in indulgence towards one so cruelly ungrateful!—

The old servants, (the butler had been discharged, but there was still a grey-headed footman hobbling in attendance, and an old housekeeper mumbling over her duties,)—the old servants noted with tearful eyes, that the squire often sent away his dinner untouched; and that the village tailor had been twice requested to put back the buttons of his waistcoat, a world too wide for his shrunk waist. He was observed to pace along the shrubberies after dusk, shuffling through the dead leaves, which the dismissal of the second gardener occasioned to collect in the gravel walks. Massingberd's hearty laugh no longer enlivened the quorum; his favourite mare had stood dead

lame in the stable for months, without so much as a visit from his master; and he sometimes leaned so heavily on the ledge of his pew in church, hiding his face with his hands as he listened to the exhortations of the gospel, that the old women of the parish muttered among themselves as how the squire must have summut on his conscience, or a sore pain aching in his heart.

What signified?—Grey-headed squires in fustian coats are made to kick about dead leaves in shrubberies, and to wax sorrowful or soporific during afternoon service. Grey-headed squires are the proverbial butts of dramatists and novelists, and the chartered victims of spendthrift sons. What was old Massingberd but the zero, good to impart value to the figure of Fred?—If any one had reason to complain, it was the son, spoiled by his bad management, and ruined by his doating indulgence. Mrs. Massingberd often said as much to her neighbours at the Vicarage, and wrote as much to her daughter

Julia, at Cobham Park. She would have said more, perhaps, had she been trusted with more; but her broken-hearted husband buttoned his griefs within his redundant waistcoat, while her callous-hearted son kept his secrets as hermetically sealed as his case of cigars.

Meanwhile the Earl, so earnestly speculated upon by the manufacturers of "fashionable changes," and portionless daughters, and so modestly cared for by hewers of his own woods and drawers of his own fish-ponds, was an object of warm interest in the little circle he had selected as his own. His return to the Faubourg was hailed as a reconquered country is cherished by its original possessor, the more for alienation. Had he been a Frenchman, to the manner of Carlism born, they would not, of course, have pardoned his devotion to the reigning family. But even the Faubourg is liberal enough to admit that purism in politics is not to be exacted of a foreigner!—

His own satisfaction while awaiting the result of his application to his mother was of a far more temperate quality. Restored to all his former favour at the Hotel de Rostanges, he dared not permit himself to profit daily and hourly by his privilege, as of yore; and his visits were even then a source of as much pain as pleasure. Every moment some sentiment to be repressed, as unfit for the solemn presence of the dying,—every moment some tearful glance to be concealed, as conveying to the invalid a too palpable avowal of his danger. In such a spot nothing is done naturally, nothing is said frankly. It was only Sophie who seemed in her element; her soft and angelic nature being expressly congenial with the task of soothing the afflicted, and, like a spirit of peace, shedding light over the sadness of the sepulchre.

St. Sévron, indeed, had courage to be habitually cheerful in the presence of the poor Marquis; but the exertion was dedicated to the solace of the living, rather than the consolation of

the dying. The kind-hearted old man had exacted it of his friend.

"These poor children lead a wretched life with me," said he, one day, after having forced Sophie and Eugénie to take an airing, on St. Sévron's promise to bear him company during their absence. "If you would prove your friendship to me in my last moments be it by devoting yourself to *them*. I can't bear to see them sad,—sadness will bring sickness, and it is enough for one of the family to be a sufferer. If you love me, dear St. Sévron, come hither every day with a cheerful face, and make young Greville bear you company as often as you can. Your reason and his rhyme, united, restore cheerfulness to this poor dreary house. It is asking almost too much of you, to resign an hour in the twenty-four of your new-born happiness; but your happiness will abide, and your old friend is departing."

"Not another word!" was St. Sévron's reply, enforced by a fervent pressure of the hand; and,

from that day, he was religiously punctual in his visits. When their discourse became too grave for his bride, whose young head was still giddy with some ball of the preceding night, Madame de St. Sévron would beckon away Eugénie, and steal with her to her own apartment, unwilling to influence the pursuits of those among whom, at such moments, she felt her girlishness to be out of place.

An admirable trait in the domestic manners of the French, is their forbearance with the sick, and their respect for the old. The Prince de Chaulieu, Albert de la Roche Aymar, and other young men of fashion, who had frequented the Hotel de Rostanges in its days of feasting, did not neglect to pay their respects to the sick-room, with news of the clubs, and the first rumours of political intelligence. Even the lively Duchesse de St. Pierre, and Madame Jules de la Roche Aymar, were unwearied in their efforts to amuse *ce pauvre père Rostanges* with chit-chat and scandal. To gratify his

musical predilections, they often persuaded thei
accomplished friend Madame de Sparre to chee
his solitary hours with those soul-searching ro
mances by which she is enabled to extract tear
from pagan Jews, and the world-seared eyes o
the *grandes dames* of the Faubourg.

On such occasions, Greville was pretty sur
to find himself, contrary to all his good resolu
tions, attracted to the side of Mademoiselle d
Nangis. Music is a powerful stimulant to th
sympathies of affection; and whenever *la cha*
mante Caroline gave rise to "thoughts that d
lie too deep for tears" by her impassioned de
lineation of *l'Exilé du Pays*,—

> Jamais de moi tu n'auras
> Une parole amère!
> L'enfant qu' éloigne sa mère
> Pleure, et ne la maudis pas!—

came home to him with almost too painful a
intensity.

St. Sévron, however, kept active watch o
the proceedings of the sick-room; and, by h

entreaties, Madame de Sparre was usually induced to prefer gayer strains, such as the piquancy and refinement of her taste redeems from the triviality of the *chansonnette.*

"While listening in your presence to these dear and familiar airs," whispered Greville to Eugénie, with whom he was standing one day apart from the circle, in the embrasure of one of the windows overlooking the garden,—"I can scarcely believe that so much time and sorrow have intervened since we last heard them here together."

"Do you remember," replied Mademoiselle de Nangis, in the same low tone, and instinctively turning away her eyes from the ardent gaze of Greville, "that I was standing with my sister in this very window, when you came to announce your sudden departure for England, on a plea which we *then* deemed supposititious?"

"You did me grievous wrong!—But you had some excuse for an unkind interpretation of my

actions!"—observed Greville, in a saddened voice.—"I had sinned past all forgiveness, save that of an angel. God knows whether I have since atoned for a brief moment of bewilderment!"—

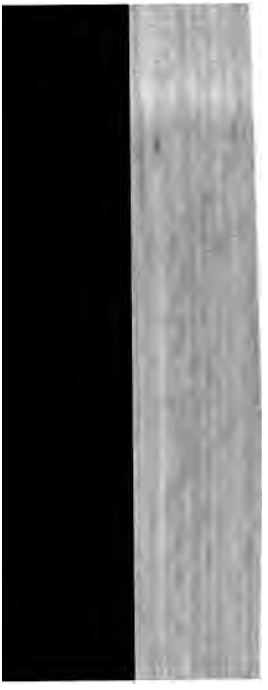
"We heard of your illness in the East," faltered Eugénie, alarmed by his emotion. "Monsieur de Cerny, who, among other Anglicisms, has taken up yachting, brought tidings from the Mediterranean that your life was given over in Syria. Trust me, you had no reason to complain of want of interest among the Parisian friends to whom you afforded so little token of recollection!"—

"They ought to have known," rejoined Greville, with some effort to restrain himself within the formal boundaries of etiquette, "that nothing but the existence of the most peremptory, the most solemn obligations, could induce me to support the odium of ingratitude. They ought to have surmised that the heart which

dared not prostrate its devotions at their feet, was breaking with afflictions of its own,—in banishment,—in solitude,—in——"

"Silence, silence, my dear Greville!—Madame de Sparre is about to delight us with "*La Folle!*"—remonstrated St. Sévron, intent upon lowering the voice of his English friend, who, in the exaltation of his feelings, was placing the whole room in his confidence; and nothing was left for him but to retire to a distant seat for the recovery of his composure, while Eugénie rejoined the circle collected round the piano, to listen to the story of the soldier's maniac bride, "*la romance dite par Madame de Sparre,*" with the same touching simplicity we have heard the ballad of "Robin Gray" related by the Dowager Lady Essex.

Scarcely a person present could refrain from a thrill of horror at the burst of frenzied joy concluding the song; save Greville, who was absorbed in devising sophistries to excuse to himself the anticipation of his mother's sanction,



"Pity me!" whispered
de Nangis, in whose eyes
by that admirable performa
ing, when the breaking u
pelled him to a reluctant fa
and duty compel me to refi
myself in your eyes!—Pity
even if exonerated,——"
not persuade himself to avo
by which his prospects w
fervent pressure of the h
dared express of passionate

"I will return there no
ville,—when, on quitting t
his way at an eager pace
Elysées, for the relief of a

the family. To see her thus familiarly,—to be ever watching her countenance for indications of a preference which, if it exist, must prove a source of wretchedness to both,—is worse than fruitless. Heaven knows it needs no nearer intimacy to convince me of the transcendence of her attractions.—I see—I know—I feel—that she is all the most fastidious man could desire in a wife. Beauty,—sense,—modesty, combined with proper pride,—tenderness concealed under the gentlest serenity,—all that adorns the character of woman, is united in Eugénie!—Had it been so ordained, how unimaginably happy might have been the ordering of our days!—The domestic life of England is the very existence to gratify her tranquil tastes. What a painting-room—what a music-room should have awaited her at the Abbey!—And then, our rides!—With what delight would she have studied the effects of our picturesque old forests, of the rich culture of our noble parks!—How new would it all have been to her;—and what

pleasure should I have found in pointing out the beauty of our scenery,—the glory of our institutions!—Above all, what triumph to prove to that insupportable crew of London chaperons, the possibility of defying the authority of their magic circle, in the choice of a wife! But wherefore befool myself with these fruitless retrospections?"—mused Greville, suddenly interrupting the chain of his meditations, on finding that he had pursued his eager way among the trees, nearly as far as the *Rond Point*,—"unless as a further conviction of my own weakness!—weakness how inconceivable, — since, after months of banishment and sickness, braved only in the hope of diminishing my attachment, I find myself again on the forbidden spot,—striving to renew the links of an almost broken chain!"——

Lord Greville's reverie was here interrupted by a sudden burst of laughter,—of all interruptions the most provoking to a person sufficiently engrossed by painful reflections to feel that ab-

sence of mind may have betrayed him into some absurdity. Stopping short, he found himself accosted in English by two persons whom the deepening shades of a dull afternoon prevented him at the first moment from recognising.

"St. George!" cried he at last, extending his hand cordially,—but still in doubt respecting his companion.

"Don't you remember my sister?"—cried Lord St. George, replying to his silence, rather than to his salutation. And the joyous voice of Lady Louisa Clare followed up the claim to recognition.

"We have been watching you, my dear fellow, for the last ten minutes!" cried Lord St. George, after Greville had gone through the usual round of compliments and inquiries; "Louisa will have it that you are studying French of some professor of the *Théatre des jeunes Elèves*;—nor can I persuade her that the mutterings in which you were indulging, while

striding along yonder in the shade, were the mere rehearsal of your maiden speech. No getting her back to the carriage waiting at the end of the avenue, till we had ascertained the fact by personal inquiries!"—

"Lady Louisa does me too much honour by interesting herself in my *gaucheries*," said Greville;—then, apprehensive of appearing over-susceptible, he added,—"I must, however, throw myself on her indulgence by reminding her that if I disgrace myself by behaving like a savage, I am only just escaped from the wilderness. Ages have elapsed since I had the pleasure of meeting her in civilized London."

"Ah! by the way,—the papers informed us you had turned Turk, or some such thing," cried Lady Louisa, laughing, "and that you were becoming a loyal subject of the Caliph of Bagdad."

"On the contrary, our yachting fellows brought back word last summer that you were

lost in the cataracts of Upper Egypt, like Sam Patch, at Niagara!" cried Lord St. George, with the same familiar jocularity.

"I was certainly near dying in Egypt," observed Greville, about as much pleased to find that he had contributed to the hilarity of his friends, as that he should have to escort Lady Louisa back as far as the Place de la Concorde.

"But what on earth brings you to Paris?" cried St. George. "You have compelled *me* to own that Lou. and I have scuffled over to have a peep at the close of the carnival;—we have consequently a right to inquire what the deuce you are doing with yourself beside uttering incantations in the dusk among the trees and *marchands de gateaux de Nanterre*, in the Champs Elysées."

"Do you pretend to monopolize the right of having a peep at the pleasures of the carnival?" replied Greville, labouring to speak cheerfully.

"By no means. But unless you are strangely

altered, the carnival is not your *genre;*—and as we did not find you at Lady G.'s soirée last night at the Embassy, where there was every human creature in Paris that calls itself world, —French or English,—I have no reason to suppose you fonder of the *comme il faut* than of the *comme il ne faut pas.*"

"Why browbeat Lord Greville by such fierce cross-examination?" cried Lady Louisa; "more especially as it is too dark to afford us the advantage of noticing the confusion of his countenance. Seriously, you must excuse our asking so many questions," she continued, addressing Greville in a more rational tone,—"for we have only been four-and-twenty hours in Paris; and it is safer to expose our ignorance to an old friend, than disgrace ourselves in the eyes of strangers. You may perceive that I only venture out in the dusk, till Beaudrant enables me to replace my quizzical London bonnet; nor does my brother dare to shew his face at the club till he has wormed out of *Les Guêpes* and

the newspapers, what *danseuse* he may allow himself to applaud, and whether Grisi is still in fashion."

"Lou has not lost her propensity for quizzing, you see, while you were eating locusts among the Arabs," cried Lord St. George. "But pray tell me, Grev, is your noble lordship as much as ever the *fleur des pois* of the noble Faubourg?—*You* are the only fellow I ever saw get on among Frenchwomen without dancing, and among Frenchmen without play."

"My course of locust-eating has not enabled me to supply those deficiencies," observed Greville. "I know as little of the four aces, or *les deux temps*, as before I pitched my tent under the cedars of Lebanon."

"Yet you are as faithful to your old haunts as I to mine!"—exclaimed St. George. "Paris is like a bad habit, which one throws aside for a time, but to which one is sure to return. Paris, to an idle man, is like opium-eating to a Turk, or betel-chewing to a Hindù,—an ineradicable

vice. Every spring, on arriving in London, I blow myself up, as if I were my own parent or guardian, for having wasted two months in Paris; — and on taking up my old position at Crocky's, promise and vow to myself that I will never again be guilty of the same amiable weakness for *poulardes truffées* and *bals masqués*. Yet, before the end of the ensuing carnival, I am as sure to find my way back to the Hotel de Londres, as the wild goose to return from its migration at the appointed season!"

"The *bals masqués* are *en décadence*, I fancy," observed Greville; "I have not heard of any one going there this season."

"So it is said every season. But by the time *carême* arrives, one finds that every one has been there, either openly or *en cachette*. By the way, Grev, as you don't seem to have been there yourself, come with us to-night! — You can't plead an engagement, you know; — for, *passé minuit*, on a Saturday-night, nothing remains to be done but the *bal de l'opéra*; and I shall

be really obliged to you to escort my sister, who would be identified if seen alone upon my arm."

"Surely Lady Louisa does not intend to venture into such a throng?" cried Greville, aghast.

"Indeed I do!" replied Lady Louisa Clare. "I am so tired of hearing St. George vaunt the delights of the *bal masqué*, that I am resolved to enjoy a glimpse of the motley scene."

"A glimpse does not suffice," cried her brother; "a glimpse of the *bal masqué*, seen from your box, would shew you only a scene which is anything but motley, being composed of black, ill-looking people,—not a bit more amusing than any other dirty mob. To judge of the humours of the place, you must mask yourself to the teeth, and submit to be asked impertinent questions, like the rest of us,—an alternative I do not recommend."

Lord Greville instantly suggested a few of

the thousand objections to such a project. "I have known other ladies experience a similar curiosity," said he; "but I never knew one of them return a second time. You have little idea of the annoyance to which you are about to expose yourself."

"Admire how plausibly he is shirking the party!"—cried Lady Louisa. "Better say at once, with proper emphasis, that an inevitable engagement prevents you the honour of devoting yourself this evening to the charming Lady Louisa Clare. *I* will let you off, though our lady of the Faubourg, it seems, will *not*."

'On the contrary, if you are determined on going," interrupted Greville, "my consolation will be, that you permit me to do my best towards securing you from the mischiefs of the place."

"A single turn will, I dare say, fully satisfy my curiosity," observed Lady Louisa. "Though long resolved to witness the humours of the carnival, I have hitherto let, 'I dare not,' wait

upon, 'I would.' *This* time, I am determined to be brave, since I can secure so invincible a knight. Come to us at twelve, at the Hotel de Londres, and we will proceed together. It will make a charming episode for Crockford's, in your next letter to Mr. Massingberd, that we endangered our fair fame by going *en partie fine* to the *bal de l'opéra.*"

"I have no London correspondent to endanger any one's fair fame," said Greville, gravely; "nor have I heard a word of Fred Massingberd since I left England."

"Fred does not pretend to be a man of letters," cried Lord St. George, laughing. "I never knew him write anything beyond the limits of scented note-paper,—except a promissory note, or a fudgeration to the squire when hard up."

"And what has he been doing with himself of late?" demanded Greville.

"Playing the old game, I fancy," replied St. George; "talking big, and acting little. I

suspect poor Fred is on his last legs; though, thanks to Inkson, the said last legs cut a tolerable figure in the world."

"What makes you think his affairs unprosperous?"

"Because he has been doing such splendid things lately,—like the extra shine of a fire-work, flaring up previous to extinction. Fred has sported this season a new cab and a new pilentum; by which I infer, that, not being able to book up with his coachmaker, he was forced to employ him. As to his dandyism, Louisa swears that he imported a *blanchisseuse en fin* expressly to get him up. By the way, I can't make the London fellows believe that no one here would shew himself in one of those flourishing flytraps of muslin and embroidery, which *they* prefer to a decent shirt!"

"The London *incroyables* are wearing collars to their coats that resemble an improved species of pillory," cried Lady Louisa, "and as much frippery in the way of *bijouterie* and *lingerie* as a

French actress. Nothing can be more unmanly than the prevailing costume."

"Or more un-French!" added Greville. "All that London copies from Paris, is effected through the intervention of the Journal des Modes, or of speculating shopkeepers, who put off upon the uninstructed, as Parisian, every vulgarism that the Parisians have cast aside. The men here are as studiously plain in their dress and equipage, as the men in London ten years ago. For once, the exchange has been in their favour."

"*Nous voilà!*" cried St. George, as they reached a plain *remise*, waiting at the extremity of the asphaltic pavement; in which having deposited Lady Louisa, he proposed to Greville to prolong their saunter along the Boulevards.

"Lou. wont be sorry to get rid of me while she makes her preparations for to-night," said he. "Supposing we dine together at the club, and join her in the evening?"

Greville had no better engagement to plead,

CHAPTER IX.

C'est surtout dans le domaine de l'imagination, que la puissance de l'inconnu est incommensurable.

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE.

THE influence attributed to the power of mystery by that great authority whom it is no longer profane to quote,—the man of genius of to-day, who, twenty years ago, was only a successful mountebank, — is nowhere more curiously exemplified than in the *bal de l'opéra*,—a mob of three thousand disreputable people, into which a couple of hundred decent persons rashly ad-

venture, attracted by the "*puissance incommensurable de l'inconnu!*"

So important, indeed, is the affluence of foreigners annually collected by the far-famed and ill-famed national diversion, that the good city of Paris, howbeit powerfully convinced of its evil influence upon public morals, lacks virtue to decree the suppression of a source of such unquestionable cumulation to its strong boxes. The dissolute scenes which disgraced the days of the regent Duke of Orleans are accordingly revived at the opera, under the decent dynasty of his great-grandson.

Of masquerades, as originally imagined, the charm probably consisted in the assumption of a part as remote as possible from the position of the masquer, and the skill with which the assumption was maintained. At the *bal de l'opéra* the men retain their ordinary dress and deportment; while the women assume a costume, the merit of which, in each, consists of being undistinguishable from the whole. A few of the

less reputable frequenters of the balls, figure in tawdry fancy dresses; but the mass, which constitutes its attraction, is composed of females in black dominos, with close black hoods covering a close black mask, leaving not a vestige of face or figure to be guessed at, and imparting a mysterious sameness to the assemblage. Hence, the piquant blunders of the scene;—hence, the facility of addressing reproaches or pleasantries to persons whose ear is elsewhere unapproachable. The difficulty of distinguishing and detecting even the most familiar form when arrayed with the real intention of remaining undiscovered, is a thing which only experience renders credible.

Lady Louisa Clare, whose object in visiting a masked ball was the gratification of feminine curiosity, prepared for the hazardous expedition with the highest glee. As Greville and her brother followed her to the carriage, they could scarcely resist a smile at the absurd transformation of one of the prettiest women in London into a frightful familiar of the Inquisition; and even her own high spirits were almost daunted

when she surveyed her new self in the glass. Having purposely delayed their departure till long after midnight, the avenues of the theatre were unencumbered on their tardy arrival; and they passed on, as if for one of the usual representations of the opera.

"Better not attempt the *foyer!*"—whispered Greville, between whom and Lord St. George the adventurous lady was closely escorted.

"Oh, yes, pray let us see all!" cried Lady Louisa. And, a moment afterwards, they were involved in a stream of people, with whom no possible contingency but the mêlée of a *bal masqué* could have brought a gentlewoman into contact. For a moment, Lady Louisa was diverted by the oddity of the scene,—the discrepancy of natural voices, issuing from a disguise so unnatural; or the still more curious effect of assumed voices, bewildering, with the most familiar questions, persons wholly unfamiliar with the identity of the questioner. But, in another minute, the press of the course unmannerly throng by which she was elbowed, grew

insupportable, and the effluvia of so hateful a crowd overpowering. Even under her mask, she blushed to find herself insolently examined by the audacious eyes of libertines. She felt ashamed of herself,—she saw that she was completely out of place.

"For Heaven's sake get me away!" said she, whispering to her companions.

"Impossible! You must proceed with the stream, and we will push our way out at the next turn," replied her brother, greatly annoyed. But these few words, by pointing them out as English, drew down upon Lady Louisa a shower of the familiar pleasantries peculiar to the spot; which to resent, is to augment a thousand fold the evil.

It was not without difficulty, or being terrified almost to tears, that Lady Louisa found herself at length enabled to breathe, in an upper box to which she was anxiously removed by her cavaliers.

"Another time you will believe me, Lou!"

said Lord St. George. "This is no place for a lady,—no place at least for an Englishwoman. *You* have no debts of vengeance to pay off, *like* most of those you see chattering so busily around us; nothing, in short, to excuse the freedoms of the scene, or invest it with interest. But, look down.—The galoppe is beginning!"

A glance at the wild train of gallopers, shouting their frenzied way round the vast area of the theatre, which, in spite of the innumerable lustres and lights gleaming in every direction, could scarcely be descried through the misty atmosphere produced by intermingling dust and heat, sufficed to complete the consternation of Lady Louisa. To retreat was, however, impossible. The carriage was gone, the lobbies were encumbered. There was no alternative but to remain quiet and repentant in her box.

"I can only excuse myself," said she to Lord Greville, "for having neglected your good advice, by assuring you that the Dronelys, the Carmichaels, and a hundred others equally prudish

and decorous, acknowledged to me their having visited the *bal masqué !*"

"Just as you have visited it yourself," replied Greville,—"by mistake !"—

"Led by the fatal curiosity, bequeathed by mother Eve to her granddaughters," cried Lord St. George.—

"And mischievously stimulated by her grandsons,"—added his sister. "Should I have persisted, think you, in coming here to-night in spite of Lord Greville's sage prognostications, but for overhearing all you were saying on the subject last night at the Embassy to Madame de St. Pierre ?"—

"I certainly tried to persuade the pretty Duchess to make a party," said he, "because it is a portion of the vocation of lionism to glide, once in the season, unperceived, into the *bal de l'opéra*. Such adventures are congenial to a Frenchwoman. She knows how to get both in and out of them, without getting either into a fright or a scrape.—Mind, I don't reproach you,

Lou, with your alarm just now!—I should have been sorry to find you a jot less terrified; but the decency of an Englishwoman's nature is precisely what disqualifies her for running the gauntlet of a *bal masqué*!"

"Yet I am almost certain that my quiet friend Madame de Clermont, on the arm of the Duke, passed me just now in the *couloir*!"

"Exactly,—coming out of her own box on the arm of her own husband;—and, even then *masquée aux dents*. It is her first essay, I suspect, and will be her last, I am sure. By the way, Grev, have you any knowledge of that pi quante little mask we met on the stairs, who insisted upon calling Louisa 'Mademoiselle,' and seemed to be killing you *à coup d'épingles* by her impertinences?"—

"Some person of society, I conclude, from her being on the arm of Ferdinand de Valsan, replied Greville.

"The *élégant*, with white teeth and black hair, whom you presented to me last night at the

Embassy?"—inquired Lady Louisa of her brother. "If you allude to the little woman in a black satin domino trimmed with lace, on *his* arm, I heard one of the party belonging to the Prince de Chaulieu address her as *ma chère Comtesse*—"

"Chaulieu's party was composed of Madame de St. Pierre, Madame Jules de la Roche Aymar, and half-a-dozen other *lionnes* of the first water," observed Lord St. George. "By the way, Grev, I saw them immensely amused by the *taquineries* with which that saucy little mask was favouring *you*. Chaulieu grew quite fierce upon the matter, and remonstrated with Valsan."

Lord Greville was not surprised; for the saucy little mask was no other than Madame de Kersakoff,—and the object of her unsparing *persiflage* Mademoiselle de Nangis,—for whom she mistook, or pretended to mistake, Lady Louisa Clare!—

"I scarcely listened to her attack," observed Greville, colouring. "People of that kind

come here by way of an excuse for a supper afterwards, at the Café de Paris; where they boast to each other of the mischief they have made, and the sensation they have created. Unluckily, the report of their sayings and doings is sure to produce mischief by encouraging others to the same rash exploits, besides depreciating those already involved in so foolish a frolic."

"I hope you are not threatening *me* with the loss of my fair fame for having hazarded so foolish a frolic?"—demanded Lady Louisa Clare.

"No, no;—*you* are safe! Neither St. George nor myself are of sufficient consequence to prove injurious. It is the attendance of the *élite* that betrays the masked *femme*. *Les jeunes gens à la mode*, such as Chatillon,—Cerny,—Valsan,—are fond of doing the honours of Paris to the pretty foreigners who, while going the round of its national institutions, usually visit the bal masqué. Among them occur those piquant adventures, that make the reputation of the *bal de*

l'opéra!—But out of the thousands on whose dingy heads you are now looking down with interest, because of their mysterious costume, there are probably not thirty from whom you would not turn with disgust or indifference, did they appear out of mask. The *puissance de l'inconnu* is all in all."

"Another time, I will take its power upon hearsay," observed Lady Louisa, almost gasping for breath; and soon afterwards, the heat, increased by the oppression of her mask, being insupportable, she proposed braving the throng, and returning home with her brother, *en fiacre.*

While hurrying eagerly through the throng, intent only upon escaping unnoticed, poor Greville found himself accosted by name by the brazen voice of the bold cuirassier.

"*Ah! ça—mon cher Grévil!*"—cried he; and though Greville passed on without answering, the name thus rashly rendered public by his vulgar familiarity, was immediately caught up by the masked mob, and "Milor Grévil,—milor

Dévil,—milédi Dévil!" accompanied by peals of laughter, followed the party as long as they remained in sight.

Unluckily, Colonel d'Aramon saw fit to follow them also. To *him*, "milor Grévil" was an object of peculiar interest. The fifteen last refusals he had indignantly undergone at the hands of his cousin Eugénie, whose fine fortune would have made so agreeable an appanage to the Château de Grangeneuve, were attributed to the influence of the handsome Englishman; and he was consequently not a little desirous to discover his rival engaged in some *bal masqué* adventure, affording hopes that he had adverse attachments. D'Aramon would have been content with the hope of being accepted as a *pis aller*, provided the elegant little woman *si bien chaussée si bien gantée* to whom Greville was devoting his attentions, should prove the means of discountenancing the foolish but faithful preference of Eugénie de Nangis.

As Greville was hurrying back through

the vestibule, accordingly, after assisting Lady Louisa to her carriage, he suddenly found himself in the hug of the bear.

"It is clearer now in the *foyer, mon cher!*" cried d'Aramon, attaching himself to his side. "Your charming little Russian has frightened herself away too soon.—You should have persuaded her to take another peep at the *foyer*, if only for the sake of seeing that conceited ape, Ramuroff, stationed under the clock to await a rendezvous,—a 'remember twelve,' sent to him at the club in a feigned hand, by Frédéric de St. Pierre."

"The *foyer* is too hot to hold one," replied Greville, trying to escape.

"Too hot for the pretty Lithuanian Countess, you mean—"

"I have not the honour of understanding you," replied Greville, anxious to shake him off before he went in search of the party headed by Chaulieu and Cerny. But Colonel d'Aramon stuck fast, shouldering his way, square and un-

yielding, through the crowd, as though the pedestal of the statue on the Pont Neuf had taken to its travels; even when Greville found himself attacked a second time by the little mask in the black satin domino, who, in the interim, had quitted the arm of Ferdinand de Valsan for that of one of the Russian attachés.

"Leave him alone, poor fellow;—do not endanger his fidelity!"—cried d'Aramon, affecting to defend his friend from her bold persiflage. "It is not five minutes since he put his Russian Countess into her carriage.—*N'est ce pas, mon cher Grévil?*"—

"*La petite Comtesse Russe?*—"repeated Madame de Kersakoff, almost startled out of her masquerade voice.

"*Comtesse,—Princesse—que sais je!*—All I know is, that he is a very happy man," replied the *malencontreux*, indulging in one of those broad laughs which harass more than words the ear of a sensitive man.

"Your friend seems singularly in your confi-

dence, *mon beau Milor!*"—cried Madame de Kersakoff, trembling with rage. "Pray have you been passing off one of your Faubourg belles upon him for a *Comtesse Russe?*—The Rue St. Dominique has every reason to be grateful to so discreet a cavalier!"

Lord Greville, irritated to find that, in addition to d'Aramon, the Chaulieu party were within hearing, rashly hazarded a retort, that brought upon him only a more distinct allusion to his intimacy with Madame de Rostanges and her sister.

"Let us leave this spiteful little mask to herself," said he, attempting to disentangle himself from the circle; "she has clearly missed her *infidèle berger*, and is revenging herself on persons of whom she knows nothing."

D'Aramon, however, chose to adhere to the mysterious little personage, so conversant with the secrets of his rival; extracting a thousand malicious hints from her random accusations.

As the crowd diminished, Greville perceived, with surprise, that the mass, which he had condemned as composed exclusively of "mob," contained, in straggling groups, most of the fashionable young men of Paris; more especially the foreigners, diplomatic or millionnaire, who were wandering about in search of adventures which disgusted them when found,—in impatient anticipation of the iced Aij or Sillery awaiting them at the Café de Paris, to cleanse their bosoms of the perilous stuff called *ennui*, and their mouths of the clouds of dust they had been angrily imbibing.

In proportion as the crowd disappeared, however, the tumult seemed to increase. The postillons de Longjumeau grew uproarious with much punch: till even the deafening clang of the vast orchestra was overpowered by the shouts of the dancers.—Greville shrugged his shoulders in disgust, as he struggled his way into the Rue Lepelletier; which, a heavy fall of

snow having covered the ground in the interval, afforded a singular contrast to the glare and reeking vapours of the pandemonium within.

Two deep vexations pursued him towards his home in the Faubourg:—that he should have been the means of introducing an English gentlewoman into a scene so polluted; and that d'Aramon should have been an auditor of the impertinent allusions of the jealous little lady in the black satin domino. He retired to rest, thoroughly in disgust with himself. Though the expedition to the *bal masqué* was far from being of his own devising, it seemed like an act of treachery towards the predominating influence of his heart.

In due course after the headache arising from the heat and noise of such a throng, came the heart-ache, the moral indigestion, with which he awoke on the morrow.—A *bal masqué* which has created no illusions, is sure to create a nausea.—While the bray of the orchestra was still clanging in his ears,—the clammy air of

the fetid atmosphere still clinging to his hair,—he felt thoroughly ashamed of himself. Nor was his remorse of conscience lessened, when the foreign post made its appearance, and brought no letters from England,—no reply to his earnest appeal to his mother!—

From the number of days that had now elapsed, it was clear Lady Greville disdained to accord an answer.—His letter was one of those which call forth an instant reply, or are passed over without notice. The Countess evidently considered that a negative was sufficiently implied in utter silence.

But how, with this dispiriting conviction, *how* was he to return to the Hotel de Rostanges?—how trust himself again and again in the society of one who was regaining all her former power over his affections?—Was it just to Eugénie to allow the confession of his attachment to escape his every look, his every gesture, when he knew that more candid and more manly avowals were solemnly interdicted?—

"At least this one more visit!"—was the pretext by which he sanctioned to himself the inconsistency of his conduct.—"After my incoherent farewell yesterday, it is incumbent on me to see her again, ere I take my final leave of Paris."—

Yet his courage almost failed as he re-approached the Rue St. Dominique, and reflected upon the bitter allusions hazarded by the malicious Madame de Kersakoff the preceding night. He was conscious of an injury towards Mademoiselle de Nangis as well as to himself.

Once across the threshold, however, the charm of the spot prevailed over his scruples; and he was about to enter the Marquis's room with his usual cheerful countenance, when the uplifted finger of Sophie, who sat watching beside the invalid as he lay asleep on the sofa, warned him to forbear. Rising cautiously from her chair, she glided forth to receive the visit of Lord Greville in an adjoining chamber.

"He is better, thank God—much better!" she replied, in answer to his eager inquiries after the invalid; "free from pain, and enjoying a quiet slumber. It is not of him I want to talk to you, dear Lord Greville;—it is of yourself,—it is of Eugénie.—If, therefore, your conscience cries 'guilty,' *avant-vous* before I open my case!"—

"My conscience cries 'not guilty!'"—replied the Earl, with solemn earnestness. "Would—would that every feeling and sentiment of my heart could be laid bare to you, and your verdict would confirm my plea."

"Since you defend yourself so strenuously, you must not resent my observing that your conduct towards Eugénie has attracted the attention of our circles;" observed Madame de Rostanges, gravely. "Your attentions at the ball of the Duchess of Orleans, called forth general notice. You are in a position not to be overlooked; and have no right (permit me to tell you so) to particularize a person whom you have already exposed to sorrow and blame, so

as to render her a mark for the censorious. The coldness of your mutual deportment at your first interviews, persuaded me I might invite you here again without danger for my sister:—nay, had it been otherwise, I could scarcely have ventured to oppose the predilections of my poor dying husband. But I appeal to your good sense,—I appeal to your good feeling,—I appeal to the regard you have uniformly professed for me and mine,—do not compel me to thwart the wishes of poor Adolphe, by precautions for my sister's welfare. Your influence over her affections——"

"My influence!"—mournfully reiterated Greville.

"Yes—*yours!*—All that I wrote to you long ago, I now confirm.—Your influence prompted her to render impossible a marriage with St. Sévron, which would have secured her happiness and prosperity,—by proposing his union with her friend."—

"The match, then, was of her making?"—

cried Lord Greville, eagerly. — "Poor St. Sévron!"—

"Do not pity him,—he has gained an affectionate wife and lost a repining one,"—cried the Marchioness. "Reserve your compassion for my sister, who has lost a brilliant position and inestimable companion, for the liberty of cherishing a chimera.—Heaven knows I have little occasion to canvass for suitors for her; and as regards worldly prospects, I had rather see her wedded with a man of her own country and religion, than with any foreigner, however distinguished in rank and fortune, by whom she must be alienated from her native land.—So convinced, however, am I of the indelible nature of her sentiments, that even as I once tendered you her hand,—I offer it again;—and if again you answer me by hesitating silence, I exercise my rights as her sole remaining relative, to say—that you must refrain from attentions compromising her happiness and honour."

"You are right!"—cried Greville; in whose

memory the taunts of Madame de Kersakoff were still rankling. "I *have* no claim to monopolise her attention by demonstrations of an attachment foredoomed to end in misery!—Till now, I trusted that circumstances would enable me to explain the fatal cause of this condemnation.—Even *this* palliation is denied me!—All I dare avow, either to her or you, is that I love her with the most devoted, the most passionate attachment; yet that, for both our sakes, it is better we should meet no more!"—

Greville was still standing, as he uttered these hasty explanations. He now approached the Marchioness, and, with an agitated gesture, extended his hand towards her. Conceiving that a token of peace was all he sought, her own could scarcely be withheld.

Another moment, however, and she found she had accepted a pledge of farewell!—Another moment, and Lord Greville had hurried from the chamber,—had quitted the house.—

A terrible presentiment seemed to forewarn

her that she had seen him for the last time;—that her rashness had been fatal to the prospects of her sister. Till that moment, she had been imperfectly aware of the firmness of her reliance upon him,—till that moment she had scarcely appreciated his power over the happiness of her family. How could she answer for it to her husband, to Eugénie, if her interference should prove the means of banishing Lord Greville a second time from their society!—

The voice of the invalid, summoning her from the adjoining chamber, put a hasty close to her conjectures; and she was forced to repress her rising tears, and assume a cheerful countenance, as she entered the presence of him over whom the sight of her affliction might exercise a fatal influence.

"Where is Greville?—I fancied I heard the voice of Greville?"—faltered the Marquis, on perceiving that she approached him unaccompanied.

"I am quite alone," she replied. "But St.

Sévron will be here soon, and my sister,—would you like me to summon Eugénie?"—

"No; I want *Greville!*—There is something in Greville's conversation that soothes me, like a reminiscence of youth! You can scarcely imagine, dearest Sophie, how I pined after that lad during his absence,—you can scarcely imagine the pleasure with which I hailed his return!—How are we to account for such predilections?—that they are sympathies vouchsafed to cheer the dreariness of life, like the wild-flowers springing in the fields to diversify their monotony?"—

"Those who have a cultivated garden at their disposal, care little for field-flowers," observed Sophie. "You have so many kindred hearts around you,—so many early friends—"

"Nevertheless, I cannot dispense with Greville!" persisted the old man, smiling at her grave remonstrance. "There is a melodious tenderness in his very intonation which,—but I am growing a woman, to dwell upon such

trifles! Just now, I was dreaming a happy dream,—one of those disjointed visions that irradiate the darkness of a sick chamber. *I* seemed to be in some blessed region,—Elysian fields, — paradise, — no matter! — some spot that admitted neither the sense of pain nor dread of sorrow. Contrast such an existence with the anguish of physical suffering and the terrors of death; and reflect what it must have been to wake from such entrancement!— Yet will you believe it, dearest?—I was reconciled to the change because I fancied that *he* was one of the speakers whose voice had startled me from my doze,—content to resign my illusions for the reality of welcoming Greville!"—

Madame de Rostanges almost writhed as she listened!—Still deeper was her despair, when, as the day passed heavily on, the inquiries of the invalid after the truant became almost peevish with vexation.

"He promised to come!—This is the first time

he ever broke a promise to me!" faltered the poor Marquis, who was reduced to the irritability of an ailing child.

"Since he promised to come, be sure that he will not forfeit his word!"—rejoined Mademoiselle de Nangis, who had resumed her attendance on her brother-in-law. But as the hours wore away, even Eugénie grew anxious. Her pale cheeks became gradually flushed with a tinge, how different in its origin from the happy blushes mantling there the preceding day!—

The winter-day closed in,—lights were brought,—the curtains drawn.—"People talk of the days lengthening," moaned the captious invalid;—"to me, they seem to grow shorter and shorter!—Greville must have had some pressing engagement, or he would not have disappointed us.—I see he will not come to-day."—

"*Pardon, Monsieur le Marquis!—Milor* came while you were asleep,—Milor had a long interview with Madame la Marquise in the *salle à manger*," observed Baptiste, who happened to be

occupied in arranging the *tisanne de violette* of his master.

An involuntary glance of surprise passed between the invalid and his sister-in-law. Each discerned the unavowed anxiety of the other.

"True, true,—I had forgotten. You should have reminded me, dear Sophie, that I had missed his visit," faltered the agitated Marquis, turning to address his wife, eager to disguise from his attendant his utter discomposure.

But previous to Baptiste's communication, Madame de Rostanges had abruptly quitted the room!—

CHAPTER X.

Il est des colères saintes où la terre tremblerait si elle sentait ce qui se passe dans un grand cœur outragé.

GEORGE SAND.

DRIZZLING snow was falling as Greville quitted the Hotel de Rostanges; and though his excitement of mind was thrice as irritating as when, the preceding day, he rushed towards the Champs Elysées, he now made his way doggedly home,—to his own silent chamber,—to enjoy unmolested the survey of prospects as cheerless as the weather.

That Sophie had acted wisely, he could not dispute. She had only exacted that which his

conscience suggested as a duty; and it was consequently to his own weakness and inconsistency he attributed his bitter sense of mortification and disappointment.

He could almost number his occasions of enjoying the society of Eugénie since he had acquired the certainty of her being free.—He could recall to mind, word by word, and look by look, all that had passed between them in those interviews. That "all" amounted to nothing, had it been recounted to others as an evidence of mutual attachment. Yet what worlds of tenderness and hope were comprehended in its broken words, its averted glances, its half subdued impulses,—defying all control of reason, all compliance with the ceremonies of outward form.

In their mere act of standing together, looking on while others danced or listening while others talked, the confidence of friendship had been demonstrated in their silence,—the confidence of mutual affection, in their tranquillity. There might seem little to resign in this mutual understanding, this simple charm of being together. But for Greville, it comprehended all

he was permitted to hope of the thrilling joys of mutual affection. — For Greville, it was the well-spring in the desart; and from this, even this last assuagement of the weariness of his pilgrimage, he was banished for ever !—

Though disposed to submit to the decree of Madame de Rostanges, he found it difficult to comprehend the sudden prudence dictating her change of conduct. What if the scandalous allusions to Madame de Kersakoff the preceding night, had already reached her ear?—What if some talebearer,—d'Aramon,—it could be no other than d'Aramon, — had borne to the Hotel de Rostanges a rumour that the name of the high-minded Eugénie de Nangis had been introduced into the coarse pleasantries of a *bal masqué?*—As the idea presented itself to him, a deep flush rushed to the cheek of Greville, and an imprecation escaped his lips. He could figure to himself the chaste indignation portrayed in that noble countenance, severe in youthful beauty as the Venus of Milo;—he could imagine the scorn with which both sisters must regard him for having suffered such im-

putations to be uttered in his presence. But what was it compared with his own bitter contempt of the traitor, who probably grounded hopes of personal success on his ungenerous revelations!—

The more he reflected on the expressions of Madame de Rostanges, the more he became assured of Colonel d'Aramon's intervention. Greville would have given worlds to find himself at that moment face to face with the offender. But he knew not where to seek him. He had afforded too little encouragement to his advances, to be honoured by a visit; and further inquiries of Valsan were indispensable to justify the satisfaction he was resolved to demand, should he obtain the smallest pretext for an explanation with the Colonel.

Amid all his rage, however, and all his regrets, he was forced to tame down the irritation of his mind to the miserable routine of conventional form. Dark as was the tenour of his thoughts, and dreary the aspect of the weather, he was compelled to repair to a dinner engagement, too formal to admit of disregard; having accepted,

ten days before, an invitation to a *diner prié* at the *Ministère de l'Intérieur.*

He had already despatched his passport to secure post-horses immediately after the foreign post hour on the following morning; and was undergoing the usual annoyance of questions and suggestions preparatory to a journey, from which even the best regulated *laquais de place* cannot wholly exempt his master on the eve of departure. He resigned himself, therefore, with less regret to his dinner-party. Of two nuisances, it was less tiresome to undergo a state banquet at the hands of Monsieur Clermont de Thorigny, than complaints of tardy laundresses and extortionate tailors from the lips of François.

A formal dinner implies pretty much the same ceremony in all the capitals of Europe; saving, perhaps, that London has more pepper in its sauces, and less punctuality in its guests. In Paris, a *diner de cérémonie* is attended with much form, but without fuss. The service of the table is better performed than elsewhere, unless in a few first-rate English houses. A ministerial dinner, more especially, being usually

an affair of contract, is invariably well organized; deficient only in the wines,—"*les hommes de Juillet*" not having yet attained the stability essential to the permanence of a ministry, or a cellar.

It was to his friendship with the Valsans, that Greville was indebted for the distinction of being a guest at a ministerial table; an honour rarely accorded in France to young Englishmen, however high their social position. Though Greville had long ceased to feel an alien in the land, he was not sorry to find himself seated at the vast and gorgeous dinner-table, next to a countryman,—one whose conciliating manners and unpretending intelligence have won for him the golden title of "agreeable," in a capital where agreeability passes for a fifth virtue, superseding the antediluvian four. With us, the epithet and the faculty are too little in request to dispose us to compute the multitude of qualifications indispensable to the composition of this minor morality;—to wit, superiority of intellect, temper, tact,—the control of all selfishness, and the ab-

sence of all pretension. For to be thoroughly agreeable, a man must be witty, wise, well-bred, good-tempered, — all that constitutes a great man, yet affords no superfluous merit to a private gentleman.

Lord Greville found *his* companion eminently pleasant; for he talked politics like a man of the world, and of the world like a politician; keen and shrewd, but tempering his wit with the *bonhommie* of a modern Epicurean, averse to inflict as to endure vexation. It was not, however, allowed him to converse much with one upon whom the politicians present were exercising their forcing-pumps; and he was consequently at liberty to interrogate Valsan concerning their adventure of the preceding night.

"I could no more prevent the little Countess from revenging herself on your ingratitude, *mon cher*, than prevent your making a display of your infidelities!" replied Ferdinand, treating the thing as a jest. "At the *bal masqué*, you know, everything is permissible; and those who have sins unwhipt of justice must not go there to expose them to flagellation. Ever beware of

the legion of furies concentrated in the tongue of a jealous woman!"—

"You do me too much honour as regards my influence over the lady in question," replied Greville, not choosing to hazard the mention of Madame de Kersakoff's name, which might chance to be overheard, even amid the loud political disputations going on around them; in which the quiet wit of Henry B—— and Monsieur ——, shone like the sparks emitted by a steam train in a tunnel, the brighter for the astounding noise and surrounding darkness. "But I still think you should have induced her to avoid allusions which compromised persons she had no right to associate with such degradations."

"My dear fellow, the law of the *bal masqué* is as absolute in France as any article of the Code Napoleon!" cried Valsan. "*There*, everybody has a right to talk *of* everybody, and *to* anybody, unless a lady under the sacred protection of a domino who does not challenge conversation. Above all, *I* am not to blame!—It was that *bœuf gras à favoris et à moustaches*, who looked like a *tambour major en retraite*, that

provoked her to attack you. Nay, after you were gone, he remained with us, inciting her to say a thousand things concerning you and others, which the angry little darling coloured, I admit, somewhat too highly."

It was lucky, perhaps, for d'Aramon that the word which Greville was at that moment tempted to couple with his own, was audible only to the *maitre d'hôtel*, who was offering him *madère sec* after his *fondu Russe*. But when, immediately after dessert, and the café succeeding dessert too closely to leave occasion for the horrible formalities of a removal to the drawing-room, Ferdinand de Valsan proposed to him that they should repair together to the Sunday evening receptions of the Sardinian and Austrian Ambassadresses, it was chiefly in the hope of meeting the Châtelain of Grangeneuve for a word of explanation, that Lord Greville did violence to his desire to return home for the cultivation of his distempered feelings.

That he quitted the ministerial dinner-table without noticing a single particular of the entertainment, is a proof that all was ordered with the usual exactness of arrangement; for

defect is far more apt to force itself upon people's notice than perfection.

"Let us do our duty first *chez* Madame de B——. Business before pleasure!"—cried Valsan. And they accordingly entered the unpretending circle of an Ambassador who has more the aspect of *un homme d'Etat*, and an Ambassadress who has more the deportment of a kindly Englishwoman, than is usually the case among Italians of ancient name.

"This is not the first time I have reproached myself," observed Greville to Ferdinand de Valsan, as they stood surveying a circle somewhat too simple in its habits to accord with the false taste engendered by the brilliancies of the carnival,—"with having neglected to cultivate the society of the Italians here. I like their manners,—I like their absence of pretension.—We have a vulgar prejudice in England (where Italians are chiefly thought of as singers and lazzaroni,) that their manners are all gesticulation, and their minds all deceit. The Italians with whom I am acquainted are remarkable, on the contrary, for the serenity of their deportment and the candour of their nature.

Easy and unaffected, they are pleasant com panions, as much from the vivacity of their impressions as from the calmness with which those vivid impressions are expressed."

"They are less exaggerated in their raptures, perhaps, than my *concitoyens*," replied Valsan, laughing. "The emphasis with which we French enlarge upon our enjoyments, proves nothing but our want of sensibility. But while praising the Italians, talk to me of their beauty! Talk to me of the gifted Princess yonder, who looks like a picture, by Titian, of one of those *doctissima* idols of the middle ages, at whose feet Cardinals and professors sat and worshipped."

"Or her bright little sunbeam of a sister," added Greville, "in whom perfect *naïveté* is combined with brilliant *finesse*, — like one of Comte Hamilton's fairy tales concentrated in the nature of a lovely girl!"

"*Allons donc!*—we shall have Madame de Kersakoff wreaking all the malice she can spare from Mademoiselle de Nangis upon *la charmante Valentine!*" cried Valsan, dragging him away from the party; and a few minutes afterwards,

they were paying their compliments in another diplomatic circle,—a circle wherein the sterling worth of the German character has been refined by long residence in the centre of Parisian civilization.

"Here, you will find yourself in a full congregation of your country-people!" cried Valsan. "Hundreds of English, who are barely endured at your Embassy, inflict themselves like a penal statute on Madame A——!"

"Just as hundreds of French, who would not be received at your father's or brother-in-law's, inflict themselves like a penal statute on our Ambassadress," replied Greville, drily,—"knowing that it is her cue to be tolerant with the French, just as it is the cue of the foreign diplomacy to be tolerant of the English. We are safe to-night, however. Our rigid Protestantism is a glorious safeguard for the Sunday *soirées*. Among the crowd, you perceive, there are not twenty English people, and those Catholics."

"Is your friend Lord St. George a Catholic?" inquired Valsan, carelessly.

"He is a man of fashion," replied Greville, unwilling to answer for the creed of his friend,

who was just then in the act of being presented to Countess Kersakoff by one of the handsome sons of the Ambassadress; and Greville entertained little doubt that her object in making the acquaintance, was to ascertain the name of his fair companion the preceding night at the *bal masqué*. Ferdinand de Valsan, however, was evidently piqued at the graciousness of her manner towards the English dandy.

"It always strikes me," said Greville, as they listened, amid the brilliant assembly, to the announcement of a succession of the historical names of France, "that the *salon* here exhibits almost exclusively the old France, which in France is obsolete, existing rather in Rome and Vienna than in your own circles. The same tone of society perhaps may be found in one or two Carlist houses; but so depressed, so stultified by the circumstances of the party, that it rather resembles Versailles in family mourning, than a correct representation of those charming coteries we find described in your memoirs of the last century."

"And which, like the leaning tower of Pisa, excite one's admiration more that anything so

crooked should have stood so long, than from inherent merit," added Valsan, too much a graft of *la jeune France* to accord merit to the *ancien régime*. "I agree with you, however, that this house is one of the pleasantest in Paris; but rather from the absence of all *tracasserie*,—rather because the mistress is amiable, and *les jeunes gens aimables*,—than because it reminds me of things that are better forgotten. But here comes your friend, the *bœuf gras à moustaches!*"

Habituated to the undauntable familiarity of Colonel d'Aranco, Greville had been anticipating the difficulty of giving, without a violation of good breeding, a sufficiently cool reception to his advances to intimate a declaration of civil war. It is no easy matter to be formal with a man who slaps you on the back, or to be distant with one who accosts you as *mon cher*, with a countenance as open as that of *Lepeintre jeune*, and as brazen as that of Lafott; and Greville feared that nothing short of a direct offence would convince a man *cuirassé* in mind as well as body, that he was insulted.

But, to his surprise, his distant bow to Colonel d'Aramon was acknowledged by a salutation so profound, as to render it worse than no salutation at all. With his blood flowing the wrong way in his veins, Greville was scarcely able to repress his indignation!—

To resent the conduct of d'Aramon in a spot where any deviation from the even tenour of social order must have been offensively apparent, was impossible; but as soon as Greville could obtain a quiet hearing of Lord St. George, he explained his position, and requested him to enter into explanations with Colonel d'Aramon as they quitted the house.

"What the deuce are you at, my dear Greville?"—replied St. George, after a deliberate pinch of snuff, rejoicing that his friend had confided the matter to him, rather than to one of his fire-eating acquaintances of the Jockey Club, who would have been sure to foment the affair into a scene on the spot, and a duel on the morrow.—"You surely don't mean to compromise yourself by getting up a quarrel with a man whom nobody even heard of?—Had it

been Noailles, indeed, or Chalais, or Perigood, or——"

"I could only have brought it to the same issue!—Colonel d'Aramon is a man of good connexions, possessing a fine property in Burgundy"—

"Bah!—a colonel of cuirassiers, and a provincial!—the vocation of the latter being to commit blunders, and of the former to avenge them. The fellow looks big, because he can't help it. If he bowed to you somewhat stiffly, the best thing you can do is to thank your stars for having lost a vulgar acquaintance."—

"My dear fellow, you don't see your way through the business," remonstrated Lord Greville. "That chattering little mask last night insulted a relation of d'Aramon in her attacks upon *me;* and I am convinced that he both resents it and wishes to turn it to account."

"*Les suites d'un bal masqué!*—Why, this is a more exquisite song than the other. Think of figuring in a paragraph of the *Messager*, as emulating the students of the *pays Latin*, or *élégants* of the *jardin des plantes*, who betake

themselves to the Bois de Boulogne the day after a ball at the *Chaumière*, to break a lance for the *beaux yeux* of some little *modiste* of the Rue St. Denis!"

"Since you are determined to treat the matter as a jest——"

"I would fain induce you to do the same!"—

"D'Aramon is not a student of the *pays Latin*, nor is his cousin a *grisette*,"—persisted Greville. "I owe more to both, than to refuse to meet him on equal grounds——"

"Equal grounds!" repeated St. George,—a vision of the majestic turrets of Greville Abbey recurring involuntarily to his mind's eye.

"In short, you are unwilling to interfere in the business!—Seeing which, I will place it in the hands of Valsan, who, having been present last night as well as yourself, is perfectly qualified to negociate between us."

"No, no!—if you *must* tilt at the windmill, pray let me have a hand in the exploit!"—cried St. George, foreseeing all that was likely to arise from the interference of a young Frenchman, instinctively delighting in a fencing bout, as an Irishman in a row.—At the close of the soirée,

accordingly, as Colonel d'Aramon, looking ineffably grand, was stalking out of the hall, Lord St. George fulfilled his commission, with an air of hauteur as fatal to all idea of pacification, as the fiery belliquosity of *la jeune France*. The Colonel himself, however, was most pugnaciously disposed. Having essayed all other means to insinuate himself into the graces and *trente mille francs de rentes* of his cousin Eugénie, he had every disposition to try the effect of a *combat à outrance* with her favourite knight;—and on a demand for explanation on the part of Greville, referred Lord St. George to his friend General d'E——, a name too respectable for even a London dandy to disparage.

"I am going to my club," added the Colonel. "I believe you are also a member. We shall be sure to find d'E—— at the whist-table."

For a moment, St. George was startled.—Conceiving it impossible that any man would venture to refer to his club—*as* a club—unless the Union or the Jockey, he was as much disgusted when he found that d'Aramon alluded to the Agricultural Circle of the Faubourg, as a

Crockfordite might be on finding himself invited into the * * * *!"—

"One of the *pommes de terres?*—I guessed as much!"—mused St. George, as he took down the address of General d'E——. Bu at that moment, the cabriolet of Lord Greville unluckily drove up to the *perron* on which they were standing: and as his lordship rushed inconsiderately out of the hall at the announcement, he pushed against the square figure of the Colonel, with a gesture which at any other moment might have passed for accidental.

Both were in a state of excitement; and it was with difficulty that St. George prevented their quarrel from producing a disgraceful brawl. It was only upon his promise to go instantly in search of the General, that they agreed to separate; and Greville repaired to his hotel, to await an intimation of the hostile measures likely to result from a quarrel now become purely personal.

Meanwhile, the evening had been dragging its weary length with unusual tediousness at the Hotel de Rostanges. Against their better reason, Mademoiselle de Nangis and her brother-in-

law were discomfited by the discovery of the secret understanding that seemed to subsist between Sophie and Lord Greville.

The motive of the Marchioness for quitting them so abruptly had been to despatch a few earnest lines, imploring Greville not to quit Paris without having accorded a parting interview to the invalid, to whom his society was so precious; and on her return to the sick chamber, she unluckily confirmed the uneasy feelings excited by Baptiste's officiousness, by assigning a suppositious motive for her absence. She fancied that any allusion to the name of Greville, must produce further inquiries.

The letter was gone; and her gentle tenderness of nature suggested the probability that Greville would not find courage to persist in his project of departure, when he saw how vital the necessity of his presence to the dying man.

Unused to dissimulation, however, and fearless, like all innocent persons, of misconstruction, she had neglected to warn the servant entrusted to convey her note to the Rue de Lille, that his mission was confidential. Scarcely, therefore, had she resumed her accustomed post

by the side of her husband, and descended to the unaccustomed sin of equivocation, when Baptiste made his appearance with intelligence that "Pierre had hastened with the billet of Madame la Marquise to the Hotel Voltaire; but that *Milor dinait en ville.*"

If anything could increase the surprise with which Eugénie and Rostanges listened to this announcement, it would have been the consciousness and emotion suffusing the cheeks of Sophie.

"*C'est bien,—c'est bien!*"—stammered she, eager only to check the communicativeness of the poor old man; who, unconscious of any grounds for mystery, and accustomed to find his prolixities treated with indulgence, chose to enlarge further upon his text.

"As Madame la Marquise appeared so eager for an answer," resumed he, "Pierre very properly inquired of the porter where Milor might happen to be dining, in order that he might follow him with the letter. But François, my lord's *laquais de place*, was unluckily absent; and the people of the hotel knew nothing about the matter. It was not discretion on the part

of the porter that induced him to affect ignorance; for he was *assez mal appris* to inform Pierre that my lord had not returned home from the *bal de l'opéra* till six o'clock this morning."

"*C'est bien, c'est bien!*"—again exclaimed Madame de Rostanges, displeased for the first time by a garrulity that she had often encouraged on the part of the favourite old servant, for the entertainment of the invalid.

But the mischief was done. When the old maître d'hôtel quitted the room, the sting of his intelligence remained. Among persons living in habits of unlimited confidence, the discovery of even a trivial act of concealment appears a crime. That Sophie should have concealed from her husband the visit of Lord Greville, or be engaged in a clandestine correspondence with him, was a thing to excite a thousand vague apprehensions. Dissimulation without guilt, seemed impossible; and as it was equally impossible to attribute a fault to one whose every thought was purity, Eugénie rightly conjectured that her sister's reserve foreboded evil to come. A damp consequently depressed the spirits of the little circle, which effectually counterba-

lanced the improvement noticed that morning in the state of the sufferer.

The Marquis, indeed, flattered himself that his discomposure was imperceptible. Ashamed of his uneasiness, he was eager that the being on whom he so tenderly relied should be exonerated from a shadow of blame, for her sake as much as for his own. Yet the dread of inflicting even a momentary pang, determined him to abstain from interrogation. He would wait her own time for being explicit; and his farewell for the night, as he was wheeled off into his own apartment, was uttered, as far as possible, in his usual tone.

Even after his departure, however, the presence of Mademoiselle de Nangis was almost as great a restraint to the Marchioness as that of her husband. Every moment, she was in hope and fear that Greville might unexpectedly return home, despatch an answer to her letter, and produce an explanation distressing to the feelings of Eugénie. Vainly did Sophie attempt to persuade her to accompany Madame de St. Sévron to the *soirée* of the Ambassadress. Mademoiselle de Nangis declared herself to be

no wonder for the effect of dressing on so cheerless a night; till at length, the often-repeated arguments of Madame de Rostanges drove her to the quiet refuge of her private apartments.

The mysteries of that eventful evening, however, were fated to become still more and more bewildering. Scarcely had Eugénie installed herself by her fireside, with a book in her hand as a pretext for solitary meditation, when a letter in a strange handwriting was brought in, with a request for an immediate answer.

She could scarcely trust the testimony of her eyes as she examined the signature!—The demand which it seemed to enforce was scarcely less surprising!—

Yet her answer was politely affirmative; and she retired to a pillow, which multiplied cares and apprehensions promised to render sleepless, after having appointed an interview with a total stranger,—the stranger whose presence she most dreaded upon earth,—at an early hour of the following morning.—

CHAPTER XI.

Elle était sous l'empire d'une de ces situations où tous les sentimens secondaires disparaissent.

CHARLES REYBAUD.

THE apartment occupied by Eugénie at the Hotel de Rostanges, was a type of the snuggeries provided for the junior branches of a great family, in the distribution of the ancient hotels of the Faubourg St. Germain; consisting of a small ante-room, sitting-room, bed-room, and bath-room, overlooking the garden and leading from the vestibule of the suite of rooms inhabited by her sister.

Nothing more elegant, or more indicative of refined taste, than the arrangement of this little

appartement de demoiselle?—The hangings were of Indian chintz, relieved with a profusion of muslin draperies; the furniture was of ebony, of antique design; and the sole ornaments of the sitting-room consisted of enamels of her parents, after Isabey, and a portrait of her sister, from the pencil of Dubufe. In the bed-room, the only object of a costly nature was a bénitier, the ivory crucifix surmounting which, was an exquisite carving by some old Italian master. No gilding,—no porcelain,—no trinkets of fashionable frippery. The toilet-glass was encased in an old-fashioned frame of solid silver,—a family relique. All denoted refined simplicity. But for the richness of the Persian carpets and the beauty of the marbles, it might have passed for the retreat of some middle-aged woman of the most unpretending habits of life.

The peculiar elegance of mind distinguishing Eugenie de Nangis was otherwise and far more honourably demonstrated.—The musical instruments in her sitting-room were accompanied by a collection of the choicest old music of Italy and Germany, interspersed with a few lighter

compositions of modern times, — such as the romances of Schubert, or the operas of Meyerbeer;—while in her portfolios were collected sketches and drawings in every style of art, memorials of her Italian tour, or Norman home; and the vigour of Eugénie's architectural etchings of the unequalled Gothic monuments of her native province had done honour to a professional artist.

More indicative still of a mind strictly consonant with her noble form and classic features, was the choice selection of her little library;—containing the best authors of France, England, Italy, and Germany, chosen without pedantry, prudery, or pretension. No gorgeous binding,—no scarce editions. Her books were friends for every-day intercourse; not holiday guests for galas and display.—The comfortable chair placed near this happy shrine of her luxurious leisure, indicated the unfailing source of Eugénie's superiority to national prejudices and the vulgarisms of conventional life.

On the morning succeeding the eventful night that witnessed the dispute between Greville and Colonel d'Aramon, two persons were seated

beside the glowing hearth of Eugénie's apartment. Half-leaning on one of the sculptured ibises of pure white marble adorning the chimney-piece, sat Mademoiselle de Nangis in her simple morning painting dress; — her cheek flushed with excitement,—her dark eyes softened by the consciousness of a thousand happy feelings;—while on the adjoining sofa, furred and mantled so as to leave only her pale face discernible, reclined the now languid and attenuated form of —— the Countess of Greville!

Traces of deep emotion were visible in the countenances of both. The explanations in which, for two hours past, they had been absorbed, had begun in mutual fear and dislike, to end in mutual regard, amounting almost to affection. But the sensibility of Eugénie was demonstrated by all the warm impulses of youth; while in Lady Greville, it seemed concentrated into the immobility of a statue.

"We should have met before!"—exclaimed Mademoiselle de Nangis, at the close of Lady Greville's startling narrative. "The national antagonism of French and English which subsists, I fear, unabated at the bottom of all our

hearts, has too long disunited us. Lord Greville entered our society convinced that it contained not a wife true to her duties; and if I rightly interpret your avowals, *you* beheld in *me*, at your last visit to Paris, a girl devoted to dress and dancing, frivolous in her habits,—interested in her views,"—

"You do me wrong!" interrupted the Countess. "I knew my son incapable of attaching himself to a being such as you describe. To find you all I see you, surpasses, I own, my expectations. But, alas! of what avail this recognition of my error?—To aggravate my regrets!—To convince me still more painfully of the extent of the sacrifice imposed upon my son, by his cruel position."—

"Notwithstanding all you have done to render this miserable history clear to my comprehension," replied Eugénie, mildly,—"I still seem to misapprehend the nature of Lord Greville's difficulties. My mind is still so flurried,—my heart so overjoyed by the certainty acquired of his affection through the precious letter you have deigned to confide to me,—that I fear I am dull beyond forgiveness. But to *what* difficul-

ties do you allude?—You tell me that he who to his mother confesses an attachment for me, which he has never avowed to myself, is debarred, by the consciousness of illegitimacy, from seeking me as a wife. It is true, the prejudices of my country are strong against such a stigma;—but only because implying ignoble blood and a neglected education. Greville's descent is pure,—Greville's education is cultivated.—The stain is accidental—a matter of form, not the result of vice or criminality. If his fortunes be affected, mine might surely suffice for both. I am rich, according to *our* estimation of riches. If Greville be rejected by the laws and institutions of his country, let him adopt that of the family eager to claim him as its own. My sister and her husband love him as a brother. Since he must forfeit the splendid home in England, which does not seem to have contributed to his happiness, his place is here.—Yourself, if you would deign to accept my filial devotion, shall be loved and served more faithfully among us, than you have ever been amid the pomps and vanities of your high estate.—Pardon me,—pardon me!"—cried Eugénie, on perceiving that

Lady Greville was concealing her face against the arm of the sofa; "I distress you by alluding to your family misfortunes, or even shock you, perhaps, by these frank projects for the happiness of Greville. Consider," said she, rising and placing herself on a low stool at the feet of Lady Greville, whose hand she gently withdrew from her face, and raised to her lips,—"consider how I am hurried out of all maidenly decorum, by unexpected insight into the mysteries of a heart, for two years past the object of my dearest anxieties!—Think of all I have borne, in the certainty of loving and the uncertainty of being beloved.—Think of the joy which at this moment overwhelms even my terror of you—*you* whom I have so abjectly feared!—Think of this, and be indulgent with my indiscretion."

"Be indulgent with *me*,—be forgiving with *me*," faltered Lady Greville, in reply,—"for having so long misapprehended your noble nature. I recognise my fault.—I acknowledge that you are worthy of him;—nay, dearly as I value my son, I scarcely hold him deserving the devotion of a love so pure, so disinterested!—Were he all the world esteems him in regard

to social distinctions,—were he thrice as rich,—thrice as great,—the universe could not supply him with a wife whom I should fold in my arms with such tenderness and trust;—or on whom I would so gladly bestow the benediction of a mother, as her on whose noble head I lay my hand!—But you mistake in fancying his fortunes precarious. Hugo is still rich. His rank and title only are affected by the circumstances I have confided to you."

"His rank,—his title!" exclaimed Mademoiselle de Nangis. "Is it for the mere honour of a name, that he is thus cruelly solicitous?—No, I cannot believe it.—I have watched him closely,—studied his sentiments,—his opinions. They are all nobleness,—all simplicity and truth. It would need much to convince me that Greville was capable of sacrificing his happiness and the happiness of others to so mean a vanity!"—

"Blessings on you for the justice you render him!" cried Lady Greville, her hands trembling with emotion as she caressed the lovely being who thus unceremoniously reproved her. "*I* alone am indeed answerable for his fault.—A so-

lemn vow—a sacred promise,—nay, look not thus earnestly into my face, or I shall want courage to avow my weakness. What greater proof of your influence than that I can already *call* it a weakness;—when but yesterday,—nay, when I entered this room,—I still believed it a solemn duty towards myself and others."

"At this moment, I am too happy to be disposed to find fault," rejoined Mademoiselle de Nangis, gratefully accepting the affectionate praises of Greville's mother. "Heaven knows you have suffered too much for me to add a pang to your troubles. I feel, too, that it is not for *me* to plead my cause with you, (or, why not speak frankly, and make it Lord Greville's as well as my own?)—for if able to resist *his* appeal to your mercy, mine is scarce likely to be more efficacious!"

"You are mistaken," replied the Countess, with a grave smile. "You are already attaining over me the ascendancy you have long possessed over my son. Your generosity has made me blush for my selfishness. Besides, since perfect unreserve is establishing itself between us, I will not deny that the absolute au-

thority over Hugo with which I have been invested, and the habit of constantly keeping on my guard against over-indulgence, has betrayed me into a contrary extreme. I have never sufficiently conceded to his predilections. Feelings of anxious mistrust have often warped my conduct towards those I saw distinguished by his love."

"No strong affection without jealousy!"—replied Eugénie, smiling. "It is not, however, too late to repair your injustice towards this spoiled child of fortune, whom we all of us tender so dearly. My poor dying brother-in-law can scarcely bear him out of his sight. Our whole circle entertains for him the most partial regard. The bosom friend of our family, the Count de St. Sévron, was yesterday observing to Monsieur de Rostanges that——"

Lady Greville started from the sofa.

"*Whom* did you say?"—cried she, suddenly and wildly, interrupting Mademoiselle de Nangis.

"You must surely have heard Lord Greville allude to Tristan de St. Sévron, who lately married a relative of our family, the

sister of—but you are ill?—You are over-fatigued?—Your journey has been too much for you!"—cried Eugénie, shocked by the sudden paleness overspreading the countenance of her guest as she sank once more into her seat.

"You have mentioned a name that calls up terrible associations," faltered Lady Greville, labouring to recover her composure. "Know that the object of the late Lord Greville's miserable infatuation,—the origin of all our family afflictions,—was the wife,—the widow,—of a Comte Emile de St. Sévron!"—

"I remember," observed Mademoiselle de Nangis, scarcely less startled and affected than her companion, "that Monsieur de Rostanges often warned us never to allude to the parents of St. Sévron in his presence. His mother, I am aware, died in emigration; for it was to procure her *extrait mortuaire* from a Scottish clergyman of the name of Blair, that the Count, previous to his marriage with Sidonie de Chaulieu, undertook a journey into Scotland."

"Blair—the wretched Blair!"—cried Lady Greville with increasing agitation.

"But on consideration," resumed Eugénie, "St. Sévron's father certainly did not perish on the scaffold. The Comte Emile survived to a good old age. I have seen the inscription on his tomb, in the family mausoleum at St. Sévron. He was one of those who miraculously escaped during the reign of terror,—his name having been actually returned among the victims."

She could not proceed. Lady Greville's hand had eagerly seized upon her arm,—Lady Greville's eyes were fixed wildly upon her face.—

"Are you *sure* of this?"—cried she, inarticulate from perturbation. "Are you not deceiving yourself and me?"—

"To what end?"—mildly inquired Eugénie, unable fully to enter into the position of her agitated guest. And while still forbearingly awaiting the reply of Lady Greville, momentary silence between them rendered still more startling the violence with which the door of the apartment was suddenly flung open,—when Sophie, hurrying towards her sister, threw herself weeping into her arms.—

"What has happened?—Is Rostanges ill?"—exclaimed Eugénie, dreading the worst. "Com-

pose yourself, dearest, compose yourself! Poor Lady Greville is herself so feeble, so suffering, that—"

"*Lady Greville?*"—cried Madame de Rostanges, starting back, and gazing with pity and consternation on the strange guest. "In the horror of the moment, I did not recognise her. How kind, how considerate, at such a moment to come and break to you the sad tidings!"

The colour rose to the cheek of Eugénie. She could scarcely understand the earnestness with which Madame de Rostanges appeared to sympathize in the disclosures of the Countess.

"St. Sévron assures us that there is still hope!"—resumed Sophie, suddenly addressing the Countess. "Take courage, dear lady! The strength with which he supported the probing of his wound—"

"In Heaven's name, of what are you talking?"—cried Eugénie, agitated in her turn.

"Of that which I perceive has wrung tears from your eyes, dearest sister, as well as from those of his unfortunate mother!—Oh! Eugénie, had you but complied with my request, and gone to Madame A.'s last night, this rash quarrel,—

this mad duel,—might have been prevented! St. Sévron assures me that the provocation offered by d'Aramon to Lord Greville was such as—"

It was now the turn of the terrified Countess to interrupt her with a demand for explanations, —explanations, alas! that only came too soon. A hostile meeting had taken place that morning. The Colonel was slightly,—Lord Greville desperately, wounded.

"To find you here with Eugénie, both pale, both agitated," said Madame de Rostanges, in extenuation of her abruptness, "convinced me, Madam, that you knew all, and prevented my using the precautions I should otherwise have felt indispensable."

But she excused herself to unconscious ears. The Countess lay senseless on the sofa; while Eugénie, scarcely more in a condition to offer aid or comfort, bent over her, administering tenderly to her assistance.

Satisfied, from the stormy explanations which took place after quitting Madame A.'s the preceding night, that a pacific termination to the affair was impossible; Lord St. George had

reluctantly entered into the arrangements of d'Aramon and his friend, for a meeting at Montrouge, at an early hour; and Greville, desperate and excited, returned to his hotel for the fulfilment of the harassing duties demanded by his critical position. A letter of explanation to his mother, of farewell to Eugénie, must be prepared, in case the event of the morrow should prove fatal; and while pouring forth in the latter the long-repressed feelings of his heart,—while vindicating himself from the odium of having sanctioned vilification of a person as dear to his respect as to his affections,—his indignation against d'Aramon,—the informer, the slanderer,—attained so high a point, that it had been scarcely safe for the burly Colonel to enter his presence at that moment, even *cuirassé* to the utmost extent of military appointment.

He told her all;—how he had loved her, how he had sought in distant countries a solace for his unavailing sorrows. The whole mystery of his fate was developed; and he besought her to love and regret him in the grave, as it had

been denied him to implore her affections while breathing the breath of life.

"You cannot have misapprehended the warmth of my attachment," said Greville, in this unqualified disclosure of his feelings. "You must long have known how tenderly I love you. I have now declared the origin of the reserve which forbad the avowal of my passion; and you will respect my motive. A nature good and noble as yours will recognise the submission due to the authority of a mother.

"And yet Eugénie, *now*, on the brink of the grave, new intelligence seems to brighten my soul! I ask myself whether the filial submission has not been exaggerated, which has allowed her to sacrifice my happiness—*our* happiness—to the false idol of worldly opinion? I ask myself whether I ought not to have dealt otherwise with her;—to have expressed myself more firmly,—to have convicted the selfishness of her opposition to my welfare.—At this solemn moment, 'I see as from a tower the end of all!'—the wreck of our prospects,—the extinction of a life that might have been directed to nobler purposes,—to the

good of my fellow-creatures,—the glorification of God!—

"What have I been?—What account can I render of the good things entrusted to me?—To what wise or useful purpose have I directed the blessings of Providence?—Alas! I have been a weakling—an instrument in the hands of others—an indistinguishable particle of the mass whose deeds are of such poor account in the sight of Heaven!—To release me from my perplexities, I trusted to time.—Vain reliance,—the reliance of fools!—What minute of the measure of eternity can be called our own?—

"Yet, had my hopes prospered, what a life of joy and usefulness might have been ours! What delights were, perhaps, in store for me, with the companion assimilated to my views and principles, as to my dreams of passionate love! Eugénie!—when you peruse this, and reflect upon the bitterness of this hour of disappointment, when, in reviewing these broken trusts, I behold the grave opening before me,—you will deign to pity, and forgive. Be it the consolation of my last moments to believe that the blood I am about to shed for your sake, may prove an

eternal bond of affection connecting you with the memory of the dead!"—

Softened by these tender and saddening reminiscences, Greville became still more and more impressed by the solemnity of the crisis awaiting him. "A fitting termination for a life of pretences!—to fall by the hand of a man intent only upon sacrificing me as a stepping-stone to his interests!"—cried he, as, with hurried footsteps, he paced his solitary chamber. "What, what has availed the brilliant position I have seemed to occupy, or the advantages I have enjoyed?—The sole ambition of my heart blighted!—even that intense affection for my poor mother which brightened my boyhood, deadened and obscured by the experience of maturity. Yes! I deserve to die,—for I have done nothing to prove myself deserving of life."

To the Countess, his adieux were of a still more detailed, and scarcely less affecting nature. Little suspecting his mother to be at hand, and breathing the same atmosphere with himself, he addressed his farewell letter to her at Greville Abbey, imploring her to extend her regard in after life to the valued being whom it had not

been permitted him to present to her affections as a daughter. Instituting Lady Greville sole heir to his property, he recommended his people to her goodness, himself to her tender recollection. But not one word tending to impress her with an idea that he had, at any moment, found her authority oppressive, or her prohibitions severe. Too late now to amend the system and opinions of his mother, in his last moments he wished to recollect only her affection.

It was not without deep emotion that Lord Greville affixed his seal to these letters,—an act that seemed to cut him off from among the living. The dispiriting reflections to which they had given rise, rendered his pillow sleepless,—a bad preparative for the duties of the morrow. But, as day approached, he recalled to mind that his eyes must not be found hollow with watching, or his cheeks blanched by anxiety, and roused himself for a cheerful welcome to Lord St. George, when offering his thanks for the important service he had accepted in his behalf.

"My dear Grev, I have a great regard for you,—greater than my careless habits may lead

you to suspect," replied St. George, cordially returning the pressure of his hand. "But I tell you fairly, that if I knew any possible means of throwing you over on this occasion, or putting an end to this damned foolish business, I would do it!—You have no business to risk yourself in such a quarrel,—a stupid, unmeaning, vulgar, *bal masqué* squabble.—You owe yourself to your mother, my dear fellow,—you owe yourself to your country,—you—"

"Enough, enough!—we talked this over last night, and ended by admitting that it was now too late, and that the meeting was inevitable," cried Greville, provoked by his pertinaciousness.

"Were our antagonists any other than Frenchmen," cried St. George, "I would, even now, advise conciliation. But I fear I must admit with you that we have gone too far to recede. We must not let these cursed fellows have the best of it."

St. George was yet more eager to prevent the "cursed fellows having the best of it," when, at the appointed hour, they took their ground at Montrouge.

The writer who assigned as necessaries of life to Frenchmen, "*du pain et des spectacles,*" might more aptly have formed a triad by the addition of "duelling." The love of duelling is, in fact, one of the strongest instincts in the *Coq Gaulique;* bequeathed, as the French contend, by those chivalrous institutions which maintain a more superficial growth in our *nation boutiquière.* Whatever the origin, duelling affords an excitement,—a melodrame *en action,*—which finds a correspondent chord in their bosoms. This wanton infringement of one of the sternest commandments of GOD, which, if a bet be called the last argument of a fool ought certainly to be defined the last argument of a madman, is regarded by the Parisians as merely a sparkling incident in a life of pleasure, and one of the inevitable duties of a public man.

On the ground at Montrouge, accordingly, Colonel d'Aramon assumed the moral and physical amplification of the frog in the fable; except that, instead of trying to emulate an ox, he evidently fancied himself an elephant. The earth seemed scarcely solid enough for his gigantic tread,—more especially the excavated



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mist hovered over the ground, leaving to view here and there the dimly-seen skeleton of some solitary tree, extending its dark scraggy boughs through the fogs of the plain. The season and the scene were cheerless and depressing. It was not the first time that Lord St. George had officiated in a duel.—But on the present occasion, when he saw the noble, handsome, gifted, generous Greville leap out of the carriage and hasten towards the spot selected by General d'E—— and himself for their luckless purpose,—Greville, so young, so distinguished, so superior to his companions and every other object visible at that moment between the earth and the sky,—it required all his self-command to refrain from treating the affair as a sacrifice to be peremptorily prevented, rather than as one of the uncivilized forms of civilized life, of which the pitiful vanity of human nature has prevented the abolition.

When he beheld, a few minutes afterwards, Lord Greville stretched senseless, apparently lifeless, upon the ground, by the fire of his bullying antagonist, all that had been fermenting

in his bosom, combined with the bitterest self-reproaches, burst forth into imprecations and invectives, of which d'Aramon and his friend were luckily too little skilled in the queen's English to appreciate the purport.

With the assistance of the surgeon and confidential servant he had brought with him to that desolate spot, Lord St. George hastened to remove the body of his friend into the carriage; leaving behind them, on their sad way, an ensanguined track upon the snow. Greville still remained insensible; and on their arrival at the Rue de Lille, where he was lifted exhausted from the carriage, an announcement of his death spread rapidly through the hotel. The post-horses were at that moment waiting in the courtyard to convey him to St. Denis. His absence at such a moment had already begun to excite the wildest surmises; and on the arrival of Lord St. George's carriage, François was eagerly on the look-out for his master. The grief of the poor *laquais de place* on finding him brought home, apparently a corpse, was exceeded only by his indignation at the want of confidence

which had excluded him from participation in a scene of such profound interest as a duel at Montrouge!

His wrath was still further excited on finding himself despatched by Lord St. George in search of Roux and Marjolin, at the request of Gunning, the able English surgeon already in attendance. Another messenger was despatched at the same moment for the Comte de St. Sévron. Regarding the Count as the only Frenchman on whose collected good sense he could rely for advice at such a crisis, Lord St. George was glad to lessen his responsibility by obtaining the friendly aid of one of the persons most distinguished by the predilections of his unfortunate friend,—little surmising that this measure would be the means of apprising Lady Greville herself of the perilous condition of her son!

Despair was in the countenances of every one surrounding the couch of the sufferer. A professional opinion had admitted that there was little likelihood of his surviving the extraction of the ball!—

CHAPTER XII.

Il y eut dans la chambre un bruit de sanglots et de gémissemens étouffés. Il était quatre heures. Les derniers rayons d'un soleil de Novembre arrivaient dans les vitres des fenêtres.

St. Felix.

Could Lady Greville have experienced comfort of any kind at such a crisis it had been in the deep and tender interest she found bestowed upon the dying-bed of her son. At Greville Abbey, amid his own people and in his father's house, he could not have been more affectionately tended than in the land of strangers. She, who had so often reviled his partiality for the French, was touched

by the tears shed for the fate of one whom they lamented, not as the favourite of fortune, but as a kindly human being, endeared to them by his gentle qualities. On her arrival at the hotel, she was forbidden to approach his bedside,—forbidden on grounds which compelled even her restlessness to remain transfixed in an adjoining chamber. After the operation of extracting the ball, the surgeons assured her that any emotion tending to the renewal of the hæmorrhage, must be instantly fatal.

There she sat,—motionless, feeble, helpless, hopeless,—her eyes fixed upon the door of the chamber that contained her dying son; watching every one who came out, as if the fiat of life or death were inscribed in their countenance. She knew that but a slight partition divided her from the object of all her tenderness, —all her solicitudes;—from him who haunted her dreams, who engrossed her waking thoughts, who interposed betwixt her and her earthly duties,—the cares of her salvation;—him, on whose beloved face it had been denied her to look for so long a period, and whom she

must never again behold till fixed in the rigidity of death.—Was it—was it but to support this cruel bereavement, she had lived and suffered!

She was not, however, lonely in her afflictions.—A friendly hand was clasped in hers.—A friendly heart shared the heavy burthen of her sorrows. Eugénie had not permitted the poor infirm woman to confront alone the trying scene awaiting her. Superior to all punctilio of worldly delicacy, she had chosen to accompany Greville's mother to the death-bed of her son; and now sat beside her, cold and motionless, yet retaining her self-possession; ever and anon whispering words of comfort to her companion, or words of counsel to the flurried friends, who were passing to and fro.

What was it to Eugénie that the society of the Faubourg might blame her being there at such a moment?—Had they not already sacrificed largely enough to the opinion of the world?—Was not the agonized woman by her side a sufficient evidence of the fruitlessness of such martyrdom?—Mademoiselle de Nangis

felt herself entitled to be there. Since the perusal of Greville's letter to his mother, she had become in the spirit his affianced wife. It was a dismal moment for their betrothing! Greville's heavy moans were perceptible even where they sat. Anguish was around them;—consternation in every countenance;— tears on every face!—

Later in the day, a search, instituted for some trifling object needed for the restoration of the exhausted Lady Greville, brought to light the letters left there that morning by the unfortunate Greville, to be forwarded to his mother and Eugénie in case of his death. The Countess was now far beyond the comprehension of what was going on around her. But Mademoiselle de Nangis, on catching sight of her own name in the handwriting of Greville, was not to be deterred from tearing open the letter. Had she wanted an excuse to herself for her presence on the spot, it was contained in those affecting lines. She thanked Heaven, as she pressed the paper to her lips, that her coming had been an act of spontaneous affection, unprompted by that forcible appeal to her tenderness!—

As to the distracted mother, the excitement

of her feelings was gradually reducing her to a state of idiocy. The blow had been so sudden, —had fallen upon her just as the clouds seemed to bewithdrawing from her prospects,—when, by an almost miraculous coincidence, she had achieved at the same moment a conviction of Eugénie's excellence and the certainty of the legitimacy of her son.—And now to find him stretched upon his death-bed;—a death-bed which her presentiments forewarned her owed its origin remotely to her evil influence!—

It was in vain that Eugénie breathed assurances of comfort into her soul. Everything around her was becoming a blank. Her eyes were fixed upon the clock on the chimney-piece, as if watching till the expiration of a certain number of minutes should accomplish her destinies and those of her son. Even when St. Sévron approached them at length with intelligence from the sick-room that the powerful narcotics administered to Greville were taking effect, and that the surgeon stationed on the watch by his bed-side considered his state to be slightly improving, the unfortunate woman gazed upon him with vacant eyes. She was

no longer susceptible of comfort from his information.

Lord St. George had been compelled to seek refuge in flight from the active and severe measures which in France await the fatal issue of a duel. His last act of friendly interposition was to despatch a messenger to his sister, apprizing her of the forlorn condition of Lady Greville. But Lady Louisa, to whom, as to most others of her countrywomen, the cold, reserved Countess was an object of terror, contented herself with writing an offer of her services;—to violate the proprieties of etiquette by entering Lord Greville's apartments being a stretch of good Samaritanism beyond the scope of a mere woman of the world. Though surrounded by foreigners, Greville was, however, still among friends. Strange fortune!—that it should be by a Comte de St. Sévron the pillow of the dying Earl was composed;—that it should be by the tenderness of Mademoiselle de Nangis, the courage of the unfortunate mother was to be sustained in her bereavement!—

Rumours of the sad catastrophe were now in general circulation. Messages of inquiry from

the court, from the various ambassadors, evinced the deepest interest in the fate of the sufferer. The most earnest offers of service from the English embassy were answered by St. Sévron, with intelligence that Lady Greville herself was on the spot, and that at present nothing could be done for the alleviation of the sufferings of the Earl.

As usual on such occasions, the most preposterous reports prevailed as to the origin and event of the duel.—The evening papers stated, (almost in accordance with the predictions of Lord St. George,) that the quarrel had its origin at the *bal de l'opéra*, in honour of a popular actress.—*La bonne compagnie*, if more polite in its conjectures, was equally inaccurate; for Lady Louisa Clare was named by the English circles,—Madame de Kersakoff by the French, —as the heroine of the dispute visited by so terrible a termination. The decorumites enlarged with suitable emphasis upon the evil consequences of ladies of consideration condescending to the mêlée of a *bal masqué;* while the rational world discoursed upon the sin and wickedness of so ignominious a sacrifice, on the

part of one of the most promising young men of the British empire.

It was fortunate for d'Aramon that he was slightly wounded!—But for that modified atonement, he would have been denounced as an assassin, or assassinated on the spot. The coteries of the Faubourg already scouted him as an apostate;—they wanted little encouragement to revile the ex-Carlist Colonel as a murderer!—The St. Pierres, the Clermonts, the Sennevals, Cerny, St. Aymar, and Chaulieu sorrowed for the handsome and popular young Englishman, as for a countryman of their own.

To administer to the consolation of Lady Greville, was a comfort denied to Mademoiselle de Nangis. Late in the evening, she was summoned home for the discharge of duties scarcely less peremptory or less painful. Monsieur de Rostanges was expiring, and desired in his last moments to entrust her sister to her arms. Through the indiscretion of a servant, news of Lord Greville's danger, nay, a report of his death, had reached his ears; and before Eugénie could accomplish even the short distance dividing her from the Rue St. Domi-

nique, the feeble sufferer had breathed his last!—

Even under this accumulation of misery, the presence of mind of Eugénie did not desert her.—Though apparently reduced to stupor by the succession of afflictions heaped upon her young head,—for she neither shed a tear nor uttered an exclamation when accosted, on the threshold of the hotel, by poor old Baptiste, with the fatal tidings,—she proceeded mechanically to the chamber of death. Little had she thought, in parting so carelessly with her brother-in-law the preceding night, that the only token of greeting she should ever again bestow upon him, would be a farewell kiss imprinted upon his senseless remains!—Little, very little, had she imagined, when preparing that morning to welcome the dreaded Lady Greville in her apartment, that before night, she should instal poor Sophie there as a widow, to remove her from the presence of the dead!—

Amid all her anguish, she had now to listen to the self-accusations with which Madame de Rostanges reviled herself for the want of care which could allow the tidings of Greville's unhappy fate to reach the invalid.—She had to

listen to Sophie's protestations that, but for that oversight, but for the inadvertence of Pierre, the life of the poor infirm Marquis might have been spared for days and even weeks.—*For days!—for weeks!*—And Greville,—who in the noon of manhood,—the full prime of vigour and distinction,—was lying on his death-bed!—

* * * * *

It might be that the mercy of Providence was moved by the intense earnestness of prayer, with which, that night on her knees in the house of death, the broken-hearted girl addressed her supplications to Heaven in behalf of the house of sickness.—The object of her humble intercessions was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow;—a plea consecrated by divine commiseration!—

Certain it is that, within a few weeks of the committal of the remains of the Marquis de Rostanges to the grave,—within a few weeks of the gloomy day when the medical attendants of Lord Greville shook their heads over his case as hopeless,—he was seated, almost convalescent, in his dressing-room;—his happy mother and affianced wife taking turns to amuse him by

reading aloud, as a relief to the far greater excitement of conversation.

All was well with them. The explanations afforded by St. Sévron had confirmed the surmises of Lady Greville, and the hopes of Eugénie; the legitimacy of the Earl being absolutely established by the certification of the death of Comte Emile de St. Sévron, at an advanced period of the Empire. It was evident that the difficulties of communication produced throughout Europe by the wars of Napoleon, had betrayed the destinies of the Earl and his weak and unfortunate father to the malpractices of an adventurer.

On this unhappy topic, however, for St. Sévron's sake, they soon ceased to dwell; as for Lady Greville's, they resolved never to revert to the sufferings of their long probation. Arrangements were made for the removal of the invalid to the Countess's airy and cheerful apartments at the Hotel de Londres, in the Place Vendôme; whither, on her precipitate visit to Paris, she had betaken herself to avoid recognition. It was there, the happy marriage was to be solemnized, affording a

balm to so many griefs, and promising a long continuance of happy years to the young lovers.

Lady Greville did not so much as indulge an apprehension that her French daughter-in-law would be ill-disposed to adopt the habits of England, or resign herself to the tranquil monotony of Greville Abbey. She could not forget that, when believing her beloved Hugo to be despoiled of his inheritance, Eugénie was eager to offer her fortune to his participation; and that, in shame and sorrow as in prosperity, she had made proof of a devotion which even a mother—even the mother of an only son—avowed to be worthy of its object.

Some surprise was excited in Oxfordshire, when Dowdeswell received from the Countess instructions of the noblest nature relative to the marriage settlements, and preparations for the bride. At Brooksfield Manor, all was horror,—among the Hardys, all consternation. For four and twenty hours, the borough of Squeamington was in an uproar;—Anodyne, like a bird of the air, having carried the news even into the mayor's chamber.

By degrees, however, they reconciled them-

selves to the startling idea of a young Countess of Greville—a French Countess of Greville!—But a few weeks before, they had been startled by the newspapers with a report that the Earl had fallen in a duel; and it was by no means an unwelcome compromise that, instead of being food for worms, he should be food for Cupids. The fact of the bride being a foreigner, was a relief to the self-love of all who had entertained designs upon Greville Abbey. It was some comfort that a countrywoman of their own had not been preferred in their room.

The only person really to be compassionated in the business, was Horace Greville; who, after receiving congratulations from his friends and creditors, upon the death of his cousin, and even having his orders taken by his tailor for the customary suit of solemn black, found that, instead of wills and testaments, marriage settlements were the order of the day!—He had soon to learn that, so far from being deposited in Père la Chaise, Hugo, eleventh Earl of Greville, had been united at the chapel of the British Embassy to a young and beautiful wife, of descent equal to his own, affording every prospect that

the twelfth Earl would not rejoice in the Christian name of Horace.

From *one* nook, meanwhile, of the neighbourhood of Greville Abbey,—a nook usually so flippant in the discussion of its affairs,—there issued not a syllable concerning the marriage. Hill Hall was silent,—Hill Hall was deserted! Though Fred Massingberd had cut his old father to the soul by inquiring, with a sneer, "Who the devil would be found to buy or hire such a cursed old barn, except to convert it into a manufactory or a boarding-school?"—Hill Hall was announced by the county papers "to be let or sold."—The old people had found a temporary refuge with their son-in-law at Cobham Park; but it was whispered in the strictest confidence, between Dr. and Mrs. Graves and Anodyne, that the person of the poor old squire had previously been subjected to the indignity of an arrest, in consequence of the engagements he had rashly undertaken to liquidate for his worthless son.

Certain it is that the stock of the estate was suddenly sold off; and even young Patroclus

would have fallen to the share of the Hollingses, or some other of Mr. Massingberd's more prosperous tenants, had not Dowdeswell, as a token of affection for the old squire, stepped forward with a handsome price in the name of the Earl of Greville. It is rumoured, moreover, that, on the very day the sale took place, the redoubtable Fred was seen lounging in the Champs Elysées, capitally mounted, in company with Lady Louisa Clare and her brother.

Already the Grevilles had quitted Paris on their return to England. The deep mourning of the Rostanges family was a sufficient pretext for omitting the usual festivities attendant on a foreign wedding. But at the Catholic solemnization, the Countess beheld her beautiful daughter-in-law escorted to the altar by all that was illustrious among the historical names of France.

It was easy, meanwhile, for Eugénie to quit her native country without a tear. Her sister was the companion of her exile. The gentle Sophie, to whom Lady Greville was attaching

herself almost as much as to her sister, was easily persuaded to bear them company to the Abbey. Though inheriting the immense personalty of the Marquis, his estates in Normandy, and the Hotel in the Rue St. Dominique were attached to the Majorat, and descended to his heir; and while the Faubourg St. Germain promises itself, or rather promises the Prince de Chaulieu, that at some future time the lovely widow shall return to Paris to reap in his affection the reward of her exemplary devotion as a wife,—(the valiant Colonel of Cuirassiers, recovered from his wound, having also put forward pressing pretensions to her hand,) Madame de Rostanges remains in England, happy in the seclusion of that princely and beautiful abode which has assumed more than all its former attractions in the eyes of the Countess Dowager.

Completely restored by the restoration of her son, there is no more talk of Torquay for Lady Greville, — no further idea of her removal from her old home.—To Eugénie, there would be profanation in the idea; and she has made it clear to the happy mother



lanced the improvement noticed that morning in the state of the sufferer.

The Marquis, indeed, flattered himself that his discomposure was imperceptible. Ashamed of his uneasiness, he was eager that the being on whom he so tenderly relied should be exonerated from a shadow of blame, for her sake as much as for his own. Yet the dread of inflicting even a momentary pang, determined him to abstain from interrogation. He would wait her own time for being explicit; and his farewell for the night, as he was wheeled off into his own apartment, was uttered, as far as possible, in his usual tone.

Even after his departure, however, the presence of Mademoiselle de Nangis was almost as great a restraint to the Marchioness as that of her husband. Every moment, she was in hope and fear that Greville might unexpectedly return home, despatch an answer to her letter, and produce an explanation distressing to the feelings of Eugénie. Vainly did Sophie attempt to persuade her to accompany Madame de St. Sévron to the *soirée* of the Ambassadress. Mademoiselle de Nangis declared herself to be

too weary for the effort of dressing on so cheerless a night; till at length, the often-repeated arguments of Madame de Rostanges drove her to the quiet refuge of her private apartments.

The mysteries of that eventful evening, however, were fated to become still more and more bewildering. Scarcely had Eugénie installed herself by her fireside, with a book in her hand as a pretext for solitary meditation, when a letter in a strange handwriting was brought in, with a request for an immediate answer.

She could scarcely trust the testimony of her eyes as she examined the signature!—The demand which it seemed to enforce was scarcely less surprising!—

Yet her answer was politely affirmative; and she retired to a pillow, which multiplied cares and apprehensions promised to render sleepless, after having appointed an interview with a total stranger,—the stranger whose presence she most dreaded upon earth,—at an early hour of the following morning.—

CHAPTER XI.

Elle était sous l'empire d'une de ces situations où tous les sentimens secondaires disparaissent.

CHARLES REYBAUD.

THE apartment occupied by Eugénie at the Hotel de Rostanges, was a type of the snuggeries provided for the junior branches of a great family, in the distribution of the ancient hotels of the Faubourg St. Germain; consisting of a small ante-room, sitting-room, bed-room, and bath-room, overlooking the garden and leading from the vestibule of the suite of rooms inhabited by her sister.

Nothing more elegant, or more indicative of refined taste, than the arrangement of this little

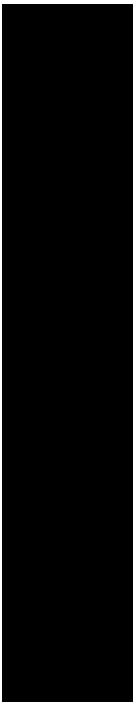
appartement de demoiselle ! — The hangings were of Indian chintz, relieved with a profusion of muslin draperies; the furniture was of ebony, of antique design; and the sole ornaments of the sitting-room consisted of enamels of her parents, after Isabey, and a portrait of her sister, from the pencil of Dubufe. In the bed-room, the only object of a costly nature was a *bénitier*, the ivory crucifix surmounting which, was an exquisite carving by some old Italian master. No gilding,—no porcelain,—no trinkets of fashionable frippery. The toilet-glass was encased in an old-fashioned frame of solid silver,—a family relique. All denoted refined simplicity. But for the richness of the Persian carpets and the beauty of the marbles, it might have passed for the retreat of some middle-aged woman of the most unpretending habits of life.

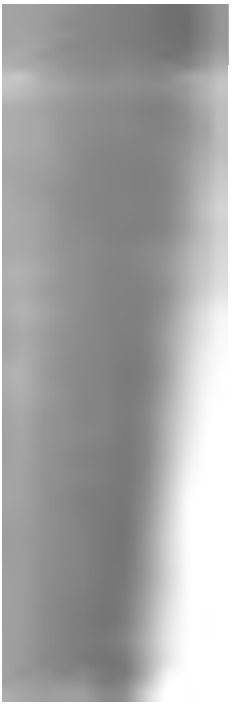
The peculiar elegance of mind distinguishing Eugénie de Nangis was otherwise and far more honourably demonstrated.—The musical instruments in her sitting-room were accompanied by a collection of the choicest old music of Italy and Germany, interspersed with a few lighter

compositions of modern times, — such as the romances of Schubert, or the operas of Meyerbeer;—while in her portfolios were collected sketches and drawings in every style of art, memorials of her Italian tour, or Norman home; and the vigour of Eugénie's architectural etchings of the unequalled Gothic monuments of her native province had done honour to a professional artist.

More indicative still of a mind strictly consonant with her noble form and classic features, was the choice selection of her little library;—containing the best authors of France, England, Italy, and Germany, chosen without pedantry, prudery, or pretension. No gorgeous binding,—no scarce editions. Her books were friends for every-day intercourse; not holiday guests for galas and display.—The comfortable chair placed near this happy shrine of her luxurious leisure, indicated the unfailing source of Eugénie's superiority to national prejudices and the vulgarisms of conventional life.

On the morning succeeding the eventful night that witnessed the dispute between Greville and Colonel d'Aramon, two persons were seated





hearts, has too long disunited us. Lord Greville entered our society convinced that it contained not a wife true to her duties; and if I rightly interpret your avowals, *you* beheld in *me*, at your last visit to Paris, a girl devoted to dress and dancing, frivolous in her habits,—interested in her views,"—

"You do me wrong!" interrupted the Countess. "I knew my son incapable of attaching himself to a being such as you describe. To find you all I see you, surpasses, I own, my expectations. But, alas! of what avail this recognition of my error?—To aggravate my regrets!—To convince me still more painfully of the extent of the sacrifice imposed upon my son, by his cruel position."—

"Notwithstanding all you have done to render this miserable history clear to my comprehension," replied Eugénie, mildly,—"I still seem to misapprehend the nature of Lord Greville's difficulties. My mind is still so flurried,—my heart so overjoyed by the certainty acquired of his affection through the precious letter you have deigned to confide to me,—that I fear I am dull beyond forgiveness. But to *what* difficul-

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ties do you allude?—You tell me that he who to his mother confesses an attachment for me, which he has never avowed to myself, is debarred, by the consciousness of illegitimacy, from seeking me as a wife. It is true, the prejudices of my country are strong against such a stigma;—but only because implying ignoble blood and a neglected education. Greville's descent is pure,—Greville's education is cultivated.—The stain is accidental—a matter of form, not the result of vice or criminality. If his fortunes be affected, mine might surely suffice for both. I am rich, according to *our* estimation of riches. If Greville be rejected by the laws and institutions of his country, let him adopt that of the family eager to claim him as its own. My sister and her husband love him as a brother. Since he must forfeit the splendid home in England, which does not seem to have contributed to his happiness, his place is here.—Yourself, if you would deign to accept my filial devotion, shall be loved and served more faithfully among us, than you have ever been amid the pomps and vanities of your high estate.—Pardon me,—pardon me!"—cried Eugénie, on perceiving that

Lady Greville was concealing her face against the arm of the sofa; "I distress you by alluding to your family misfortunes, or even shock you, perhaps, by these frank projects for the happiness of Greville. Consider," said she, rising and placing herself on a low stool at the feet of Lady Greville, whose hand she gently withdrew from her face, and raised to her lips,—"consider how I am hurried out of all maidenly decorum, by unexpected insight into the mysteries of a heart, for two years past the object of my dearest anxieties!—Think of all I have borne, in the certainty of loving and the uncertainty of being beloved.—Think of the joy which at this moment overwhelms even my terror of you—*you* whom I have so abjectly feared!—Think of this, and be indulgent with my indiscretion."

"Be indulgent with *me*,—be forgiving with *me*;" faltered Lady Greville, in reply,—"for having so long misapprehended your noble nature. I recognise my fault.—I acknowledge that you are worthy of him;—nay, dearly as I value my son, I scarcely hold him deserving the devotion of a love so pure, so disinterested!—Were he all the world esteems him in regard

to social distinctions,—were he thrice as rich,—thrice as great,—the universe could not supply him with a wife whom I should fold in my arms with such tenderness and trust;—or on whom I would so gladly bestow the benediction of a mother, as her on whose noble head I lay my hand!—But you mistake in fancying his fortunes precarious. Hugo is still rich. His rank and title only are affected by the circumstances I have confided to you."

"His rank,—his title!" exclaimed Mademoiselle de Nangis. "Is it for the mere honour of a name, that he is thus cruelly solicitous?—No, I cannot believe it.—I have watched him closely,—studied his sentiments,—his opinions. They are all nobleness,—all simplicity and truth. It would need much to convince me that Greville was capable of sacrificing his happiness and the happiness of others to so mean a vanity!"—

"Blessings on you for the justice you render him!" cried Lady Greville, her hands trembling with emotion as she caressed the lovely being who thus unceremoniously reproved her. "*I* alone am indeed answerable for his fault.—A so-

lemn vow—a sacred promise,—nay, look not thus earnestly into my face, or I shall want courage to avow my weakness. What greater proof of your influence than that I can already *call* it a weakness;—when but yesterday,—nay, when I entered this room,—I still believed it a solemn duty towards myself and others."

"At this moment, I am too happy to be disposed to find fault," rejoined Mademoiselle de Nangis, gratefully accepting the affectionate praises of Greville's mother. "Heaven knows you have suffered too much for me to add a pang to your troubles. I feel, too, that it is not for *me* to plead my cause with you, (or, why not speak frankly, and make it Lord Greville's as well as my own?)—for if able to resist *his* appeal to your mercy, mine is scarce likely to be more efficacious!"

"You are mistaken," replied the Countess, with a grave smile. "You are already attaining over me the ascendancy you have long possessed over my son. Your generosity has made me blush for my selfishness. Besides, since perfect unreserve is establishing itself between us, I will not deny that the absolute au-

thority over Hugo with which I have been invested, and the habit of constantly keeping on my guard against over-indulgence, has betrayed me into a contrary extreme. I have never sufficiently conceded to his predilections. Feelings of anxious mistrust have often warped my conduct towards those I saw distinguished by his love."

"No strong affection without jealousy!"—replied Eugénie, smiling. "It is not, however too late to repair your injustice towards this spoiled child of fortune, whom we all of us tender so dearly. My poor dying brother-in-law can scarcely bear him out of his sight. Our whole circle entertains for him the most partial regard. The bosom friend of our family, the Count de St. Sévron, was yesterday observing to Monsieur de Rostanges that——"

Lady Greville started from the sofa.

"*Whom* did you say?"—cried she, suddenly and wildly, interrupting Mademoiselle de Nangis.

"You must surely have heard Lord Greville allude to Tristan de St. Sévron, who lately married a relative of our family, the

sister of—but you are ill?—You are over-fatigued?—Your journey has been too much for you!"—cried Eugénie, shocked by the sudden paleness overspreading the countenance of her guest as she sank once more into her seat.

"You have mentioned a name that calls up terrible associations," faltered Lady Greville, labouring to recover her composure. "Know that the object of the late Lord Greville's miserable infatuation,—the origin of all our family afflictions,—was the wife,—the widow,—of a Comte Emile de St. Sévron!"—

"I remember," observed Mademoiselle de Nangis, scarcely less startled and affected than her companion, "that Monsieur de Rostanges often warned us never to allude to the parents of St. Sévron in his presence. His mother, I am aware, died in emigration; for it was to procure her *extrait mortuaire* from a Scottish clergyman of the name of Blair, that the Count, previous to his marriage with Sidonie de Chaulieu, undertook a journey into Scotland."

"Blair—the wretched Blair!"—cried Lady Greville with increasing agitation.

"But on consideration," resumed Eugénie, "St. Sévron's father certainly did not perish on the scaffold. The Comte Emile survived to a good old age. I have seen the inscription on his tomb, in the family mausoleum at St. Sévron. He was one of those who miraculously escaped during the reign of terror,—his name having been actually returned among the victims."

She could not proceed. Lady Greville's hand had eagerly seized upon her arm,—Lady Greville's eyes were fixed wildly upon her face.—

"Are you *sure* of this?"—cried she, inarticulate from perturbation. "Are you not deceiving yourself and me?"—

"To what end?"—mildly inquired Eugénie, unable fully to enter into the position of her agitated guest. And while still forbearing to awaiting the reply of Lady Greville, momentary silence between them rendered still more startling the violence with which the door of the apartment was suddenly flung open,—when Sophie, hurrying towards her sister, threw herself weeping into her arms.—

"What has happened?—Is Rostanges ill?"—exclaimed Eugénie, dreading the worst. "Com

pose yourself, dearest, compose yourself! Poor Lady Greville is herself so feeble, so suffering, that—"

"*Lady Greville?*"—cried Madame de Rostanges, starting back, and gazing with pity and consternation on the strange guest. "In the horror of the moment, I did not recognise her. How kind, how considerate, at such a moment to come and break to you the sad tidings!"

The colour rose to the cheek of Eugénie. She could scarcely understand the earnestness with which Madame de Rostanges appeared to sympathize in the disclosures of the Countess.

"St. Sévron assures us that there is still hope!"—resumed Sophie, suddenly addressing the Countess. "Take courage, dear lady! The strength with which he supported the probing of his wound—"

"In Heaven's name, of what are you talking?"—cried Eugénie, agitated in her turn.

"Of that which I perceive has wrung tears from your eyes, dearest sister, as well as from those of his unfortunate mother!—Oh! Eugénie, had you but complied with my request, and gone to Madame A.'s last night, this rash quarrel,—

this mad duel,—might have been prevented! St. Sévron assures me that the provocation offered by d'Aramon to Lord Greville was such as—"

It was now the turn of the terrified Countess to interrupt her with a demand for explanations, —explanations, alas! that only came too soon. A hostile meeting had taken place that morning. The Colonel was slightly,—Lord Greville desperately, wounded.

"To find you here with Eugénie, both pale, both agitated," said Madame de Rostanges, in extenuation of her abruptness, "convinced me, Madam, that you knew all, and prevented my using the precautions I should otherwise have felt indispensable."

But she excused herself to unconscious ears. The Countess lay senseless on the sofa; while Eugénie, scarcely more in a condition to offer aid or comfort, bent over her, administering tenderly to her assistance.

Satisfied, from the stormy explanations which took place after quitting Madame A.'s the preceding night, that a pacific termination to the affair was impossible; Lord St. George had

reluctantly entered into the arrangements of d'Aramon and his friend, for a meeting at Montrouge, at an early hour; and Greville, desperate and excited, returned to his hotel for the fulfilment of the harassing duties demanded by his critical position. A letter of explanation to his mother, of farewell to Eugénie, must be prepared, in case the event of the morrow should prove fatal; and while pouring forth in the latter the long-repressed feelings of his heart,—while vindicating himself from the odium of having sanctioned vilification of a person as dear to his respect as to his affections,—his indignation against d'Aramon,—the informer, the slanderer,—attained so high a point, that it had been scarcely safe for the burly Colonel to enter his presence at that moment, even *cuirassé* to the utmost extent of military appointment.

He told her all;—how he had loved her, how he had sought in distant countries a solace for his unavailing sorrows. The whole mystery of his fate was developed; and he besought her to love and regret him in the grave, as it had

been denied him to implore her affections while breathing the breath of life.

"You cannot have misapprehended the warmth of my attachment," said Greville, in this unqualified disclosure of his feelings. "You must long have known how tenderly I love you I have now declared the origin of the reserv which forbad the avowal of my passion; and you will respect my motive. A nature good and noble as yours will recognise the submissio due to the authority of a mother.

"And yet Eugénie, *now*, on the brink of th grave, new intelligence seems to brighten my soul I ask myself whether the filial submission has no been exaggerated, which has allowed her to sacri fice my happiness—*our* happiness—to the fals idol of worldly opinion? I ask myself whether ought not to have dealt otherwise with her;—t have expressed myself more firmly,—to have con victed the selfishness of her opposition to m welfare.—At this solemn moment, 'I see a from a tower the end of all!'—the wreck of ou prospects,—the extinction of a life that migh have been directed to nobler purposes,—to th

good of my fellow-creatures,—the glorification of God!—

"What have I been?—What account can I render of the good things entrusted to me?—To what wise or useful purpose have I directed the blessings of Providence?—Alas! I have been a weakling—an instrument in the hands of others—an indistinguishable particle of the mass whose deeds are of such poor account in the sight of Heaven!—To release me from my perplexities, I trusted to time.—Vain reliance,—the reliance of fools!—What minute of the measure of eternity can be called our own?—

"Yet, had my hopes prospered, what a life of joy and usefulness might have been ours! What delights were, perhaps, in store for me, with the companion assimilated to my views and principles, as to my dreams of passionate love! Eugénie!—when you peruse this, and reflect upon the bitterness of this hour of disappointment, when, in reviewing these broken trusts, I behold the grave opening before me,—you will deign to pity, and forgive. Be it the consolation of my last moments to believe that the blood I am about to shed for your sake, may prove an

eternal bond of affection connecting you with the memory of the dead!"—

Softened by these tender and saddening re miniscences, Greville became still more an more impressed by the solemnity of the cris awaiting him. "A fitting termination for a li of pretences!—to fall by the hand of a man inte only upon sacrificing me as a stepping-stone his interests!"—cried he, as, with hurried foo steps, he paced his solitary chamber. "Wh what has availed the brilliant position I ha seemed to occupy, or the advantages I have e joyed?—The sole ambition of my heart blighte —even that intense affection for my poor moth which brightened my boyhood, deadened a obscured by the experience of maturity. Ye I deserve to die,—for I have done nothing prove myself deserving of life."

To the Countess, his adieux were of a st more detailed, and scarcely less affecting natu Little suspecting his mother to be at hand, a breathing the same atmosphere with himself, addressed his farewell letter to her at Grevi Abbey, imploring her to extend her regard after life to the valued being whom it had n

been permitted him to present to her affections as a daughter. Instituting Lady Greville sole heir to his property, he recommended his people to her goodness, himself to her tender recollection. But not one word tending to impress her with an idea that he had, at any moment, found her authority oppressive, or her prohibitions severe. Too late now to amend the system and opinions of his mother, in his last moments he wished to recollect only her affection.

It was not without deep emotion that Lord Greville affixed his seal to these letters,—an act that seemed to cut him off from among the living. The dispiriting reflections to which they had given rise, rendered his pillow sleepless,—a bad preparative for the duties of the morrow. But, as day approached, he recalled to mind that his eyes must not be found hollow with watching, or his cheeks blanched by anxiety, and roused himself for a cheerful welcome to Lord St. George, when offering his thanks for the important service he had accepted in his behalf.

"My dear Grev, I have a great regard for you,—greater than my careless habits may lead

you to suspect," replied St. George, cordially returning the pressure of his hand. "But I tel you fairly, that if I knew any possible means o throwing you over on this occasion, or puttin an end to this damned foolish business, I woul do it!—You have no business to risk yourself i such a quarrel,—a stupid, unmeaning, vulga *bal masqué* squabble.—You owe yourself to yo mother, my dear fellow,—you owe yourself t your country,—you—"

"Enough, enough!—we talked this over la night, and ended by admitting that it was no too late, and that the meeting was inevitable, cried Greville, provoked by his pertinacious ness.

"Were our antagonists any other tha Frenchmen," cried St. George, "I would, eve now, advise conciliation. But I fear I mu admit with you that we have gone too far to re cede. We must not let these cursed fellow have the best of it."

St. George was yet more eager to prevent th "cursed fellows having the best of it," when, a the appointed hour, they took their ground a Montrouge.

The writer who assigned as necessaries of life to Frenchmen, "*du pain et des spectacles*," might more aptly have formed a triad by the addition of "duelling." The love of duelling is, in fact, one of the strongest instincts in the *Coq Gaulique;* bequeathed, as the French contend, by those chivalrous institutions which maintain a more superficial growth in our *nation boutiquière.* Whatever the origin, duelling affords an excitement,—a melodrame *en action,*—which finds a correspondent chord in their bosoms. This wanton infringement of one of the sternest commandments of GOD, which, if a bet be called the last argument of a fool ought certainly to be defined the last argument of a madman, is regarded by the Parisians as merely a sparkling incident in a life of pleasure, and one of the inevitable duties of a public man.

On the ground at Montrouge, accordingly, Colonel d'Aramon assumed the moral and physical amplification of the frog in the fable; except that, instead of trying to emulate an ox, he evidently fancied himself an elephant. The earth seemed scarcely solid enough for his gigantic tread,—more especially the excavated

earth of that region of quarries. Impossible t be more pompous, more magniloquent; an Lord St. George, the easy, unassuming man the world, would have scarcely refrained from laugh, but that the idea of Greville,—the hig bred, popular, promising Greville,—exposed mortal peril from such a hand, inclined him rath to tears. Even General d'E——, usually ratio and agreeable, seemed to have added a cubit his stature by the simple fact of having a case duelling pistols in his hand; and St. Geo actually ground his teeth with rage, at findi himself compelled to observe the ceremonies a deferences of life with two individuals who, an occasion so fearfully matter of fact, persis in playing fantastic tricks, as if a fashiona audience were collected to applaud their *fanfa nade*.

It was a chilly winter morning. The surf of the snow, having yielded to the sun of the p ceding afternoon, had lost the freshness wh prevents even snow from being unsightly. T beaten track on the causeway of the Ro d'Orléans, shewed dingily amid the surround whiteness; and at that early hour, a he

mist hovered over the ground, leaving to view here and there the dimly-seen skeleton of some solitary tree, extending its dark scraggy boughs through the fogs of the plain. The season and the scene were cheerless and depressing. It was not the first time that Lord St. George had officiated in a duel.—But on the present occasion, when he saw the noble, handsome, gifted, generous Greville leap out of the carriage and hasten towards the spot selected by General d'E—— and himself for their luckless purpose,—Greville, so young, so distinguished, so superior to his companions and every other object visible at that moment between the earth and the sky,—it required all his self-command to refrain from treating the affair as a sacrifice to be peremptorily prevented, rather than as one of the uncivilized forms of civilized life, of which the pitiful vanity of human nature has prevented the abolition.

When he beheld, a few minutes afterwards, Lord Greville stretched senseless, apparently lifeless, upon the ground, by the fire of his bullying antagonist, all that had been fermenting

in his bosom, combined with the bitterest self-reproaches, burst forth into imprecations and invectives, of which d'Aramon and his friend were luckily too little skilled in the queen's English to appreciate the purport.

With the assistance of the surgeon and confidential servant he had brought with him to that desolate spot, Lord St. George hastened to remove the body of his friend into the carriage; leaving behind them, on their sad way, an ensanguined track upon the snow. Greville still remained insensible; and on their arrival at the Rue de Lille, where he was lifted exhausted from the carriage, an announcement of his death spread rapidly through the hotel. The post-horses were at that moment waiting in the courtyard to convey him to St. Denis. His absence at such a moment had already begun to excite the wildest surmises; and on the arrival of Lord St. George's carriage, François was eagerly on the look-out for his master. The grief of the poor *laquais de place* on finding him brought home, apparently a corpse, was exceeded only by his indignation at the want of confidence

which had excluded him from participation in a scene of such profound interest as a duel at Montrouge!

His wrath was still further excited on finding himself despatched by Lord St. George in search of Roux and Marjolin, at the request of Gunning, the able English surgeon already in attendance. Another messenger was despatched at the same moment for the Comte de St. Sévron. Regarding the Count as the only Frenchman on whose collected good sense he could rely for advice at such a crisis, Lord St. George was glad to lessen his responsibility by obtaining the friendly aid of one of the persons most distinguished by the predilections of his unfortunate friend,—little surmising that this measure would be the means of apprising Lady Greville herself of the perilous condition of her son!

Despair was in the countenances of every one surrounding the couch of the sufferer. A professional opinion had admitted that there was little likelihood of his surviving the extraction of the ball!—

CHAPTER XII.

Il y eut dans la chambre un bruit de sanglots et de gémissemens étouffés. Il était quatre heures. Les derniers rayons d'un soleil de Novembre arrivaient dans les vitres des fenêtres.

St. Felix.

Could Lady Greville have experienced comfort of any kind at such a crisis it ha been in the deep and tender interest she foun bestowed upon the dying-bed of her son. A Greville Abbey, amid his own people and i his father's house, he could not have bee more affectionately tended than in the lan of strangers. She, who had so often revile his partiality for the French, was touche

by the tears shed for the fate of one whom they lamented, not as the favourite of fortune, but as a kindly human being, endeared to them by his gentle qualities. On her arrival at the hotel, she was forbidden to approach his bedside,—forbidden on grounds which compelled even her restlessness to remain transfixed in an adjoining chamber. After the operation of extracting the ball, the surgeons assured her that any emotion tending to the renewal of the hæmorrhage, must be instantly fatal.

There she sat,—motionless, feeble, helpless, hopeless,—her eyes fixed upon the door of the chamber that contained her dying son; watching every one who came out, as if the fiat of life or death were inscribed in their countenance. She knew that but a slight partition divided her from the object of all her tenderness, —all her solicitudes;—from him who haunted her dreams, who engrossed her waking thoughts, who interposed betwixt her and her earthly duties,—the cares of her salvation;—him, on whose beloved face it had been denied her to look for so long a period, and whom she

must never again behold till fixed in the rigi-
dity of death.—Was it—was it but to support
this cruel bereavement, she had lived and
suffered!

She was not, however, lonely in her afflic
tions.—A friendly hand was clasped in hers.—
A friendly heart shared the heavy burthen o
her sorrows. Eugénie had not permitted th
poor infirm woman to confront alone the tryin
scene awaiting her. Superior to all punctilio o
worldly delicacy, she had chosen to accompan
Greville's mother to the death-bed of her son
and now sat beside her, cold and motion
less, yet retaining her self-possession; ever an
anon whispering words of comfort to her com
panion, or words of counsel to the flurrie
friends, who were passing to and fro.

What was it to Eugénie that the society o
the Faubourg might blame her being there
such a moment?—Had they not already sacr
ficed largely enough to the opinion of th
world?—Was not the agonized woman by h
side a sufficient evidence of the fruitlessness
such martyrdom?—Mademoiselle de Nang

felt herself entitled to be there. Since the perusal of Greville's letter to his mother, she had become in the spirit his affianced wife. It was a dismal moment for their betrothing! Greville's heavy moans were perceptible even where they sat. Anguish was around them;—consternation in every countenance;— tears on every face!—

Later in the day, a search, instituted for some trifling object needed for the restoration of the exhausted Lady Greville, brought to light the letters left there that morning by the unfortunate Greville, to be forwarded to his mother and Eugénie in case of his death. The Countess was now far beyond the comprehension of what was going on around her. But Mademoiselle de Nangis, on catching sight of her own name in the handwriting of Greville, was not to be deterred from tearing open the letter. Had she wanted an excuse to herself for her presence on the spot, it was contained in those affecting lines. She thanked Heaven, as she pressed the paper to her lips, that her coming had been an act of spontaneous affection, unprompted by that forcible appeal to her tenderness!—

As to the distracted mother, the excitement

of her feelings was gradually reducing her to a state of idiocy. The blow had been so sudden —had fallen upon her just as the clouds seemed to bewithdrawing from her prospects,—when by an almost miraculous coincidence, she had achieved at the same moment a conviction of Eugénie's excellence and the certainty of the legitimacy of her son.—And now to find him stretched upon his death-bed;—a death-bed which her presentiments forewarned her owed its origin remotely to her evil influence!—

It was in vain that Eugénie breathed assurances of comfort into her soul. Everything around her was becoming a blank. Her eyes were fixed upon the clock on the chimney-piece, as if watching till the expiration of a certain number of minutes should accomplish her destinies and those of her son. Even when St. Sévron approached them at length with intelligence from the sick-room that the powerful narcotics administered to Greville were taking effect, and that the surgeon stationed on the watch by his bed-side considered his state to be slightly improving, the unfortunate woman gazed upon him with vacant eyes. She was

no longer susceptible of comfort from his information.

Lord St. George had been compelled to seek refuge in flight from the active and severe measures which in France await the fatal issue of a duel. His last act of friendly interposition was to despatch a messenger to his sister, apprizing her of the forlorn condition of Lady Greville. But Lady Louisa, to whom, as to most others of her countrywomen, the cold, reserved Countess was an object of terror, contented herself with writing an offer of her services;—to violate the proprieties of etiquette by entering Lord Greville's apartments being a stretch of good Samaritanism beyond the scope of a mere woman of the world. Though surrounded by foreigners, Greville was, however, still among friends. Strange fortune!—that it should be by a Comte de St. Sévron the pillow of the dying Earl was composed;—that it should be by the tenderness of Mademoiselle de Nangis, the courage of the unfortunate mother was to be sustained in her bereavement!—

Rumours of the sad catastrophe were now in general circulation. Messages of inquiry from

the court, from the various ambassadors, evinced the deepest interest in the fate of the sufferer. The most earnest offers of service from the English embassy were answered by St. Sévron, with intelligence that Lady Greville herself was on the spot, and that at present nothing could be done for the alleviation of the sufferings of the Earl.

As usual on such occasions, the most preposterous reports prevailed as to the origin and event of the duel.—The evening papers stated, (almost in accordance with the predictions of Lord St. George,) that the quarrel had its origin at the *bal de l'opéra,* in honour of a popular actress.—*La bonne compagnie,* if more polite in its conjectures, was equally inaccurate; for Lady Louisa Clare was named by the English circles,—Madame de Kersakoff by the French, —as the heroine of the dispute visited by so terrible a termination. The decorumites enlarged with suitable emphasis upon the evil consequences of ladies of consideration condescending to the mêlée of a *bal masqué;* while the rational world discoursed upon the sin and wickedness of so ignominious a sacrifice, on the

part of one of the most promising young men of the British empire.

It was fortunate for d'Aramon that he was slightly wounded!—But for that modified atonement, he would have been denounced as an assassin, or assassinated on the spot. The coteries of the Faubourg already scouted him as an apostate;—they wanted little encouragement to revile the ex-Carlist Colonel as a murderer!—The St. Pierres, the Clermonts, the Sennevals, Cerny, St. Aymar, and Chaulieu sorrowed for the handsome and popular young Englishman, as for a countryman of their own.

To administer to the consolation of Lady Greville, was a comfort denied to Mademoiselle de Nangis. Late in the evening, she was summoned home for the discharge of duties scarcely less peremptory or less painful. Monsieur de Rostanges was expiring, and desired in his last moments to entrust her sister to her arms. Through the indiscretion of a servant, news of Lord Greville's danger, nay, a report of his death, had reached his ears; and before Eugénie could accomplish even the short distance dividing her from the Rue St. Domi-

nique, the feeble sufferer had breathed l
last!—

Even under this accumulation of misery, t
presence of mind of Eugénie did not des
her.—Though apparently reduced to stupor
the succession of afflictions heaped upon l
young head,—for she neither shed a tear
uttered an exclamation when accosted, on
threshold of the hotel, by poor old Bapti
with the fatal tidings, — she proceeded
chanically to the chamber of death. Li
had she thought, in parting so carelessly w
her brother-in-law the preceding night, t
the only token of greeting she should ever ag
bestow upon him, would be a farewell kiss i
printed upon his senseless remains! — Lit
very little, had she imagined, when prepar
that morning to welcome the dreaded L
Greville in her apartment, that before night,
should instal poor Sophie there as a widow,
remove her from the presence of the dead!—

Amid all her anguish, she had now to lis
to the self-accusations with which Madame
Rostanges reviled herself for the want of c
which could allow the tidings of Greville's
happy fate to reach the invalid.—She had

listen to Sophie's protestations that, but for that oversight, but for the inadvertence of Pierre, the life of the poor infirm Marquis might have been spared for days and even weeks.—*For days!—for weeks!*—And Greville,—who in the noon of manhood,—the full prime of vigour and distinction,—was lying on his death-bed!—

* * * * *

It might be that the mercy of Providence was moved by the intense earnestness of prayer, with which, that night on her knees in the house of death, the broken-hearted girl addressed her supplications to Heaven in behalf of the house of sickness.—The object of her humble intercessions was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow;—a plea consecrated by divine commiseration!—

Certain it is that, within a few weeks of the committal of the remains of the Marquis de Rostanges to the grave,—within a few weeks of the gloomy day when the medical attendants of Lord Greville shook their heads over his case as hopeless,—he was seated, almost convalescent, in his dressing-room;—his happy mother and affianced wife taking turns to amuse him by

reading aloud, as a relief to the far greater excitement of conversation.

All was well with them. The explanations afforded by St. Sévron had confirmed the surmises of Lady Greville, and the hopes of Eugénie; the legitimacy of the Earl being absolutely established by the certification of the death of Comte Emile de St. Sévron, at an advanced period of the Empire. It was evident that the difficulties of communication produced throughout Europe by the wars of Napoleon, had betrayed the destinies of the Earl and his weak and unfortunate father to the malpractices of an adventurer.

On this unhappy topic, however, for St. Sévron's sake, they soon ceased to dwell; as for Lady Greville's, they resolved never to revert to the sufferings of their long probation. Arrangements were made for the removal of the invalid to the Countess's airy and cheerful apartments at the Hotel de Londres, in the Place Vendôme; whither, on her precipitate visit to Paris, she had betaken herself to avoid recognition. It was there, the happy marriage was to be solemnized, affording a

balm to so many griefs, and promising a long continuance of happy years to the young lovers.

Lady Greville did not so much as indulge an apprehension that her French daughter-in-law would be ill-disposed to adopt the habits of England, or resign herself to the tranquil monotony of Greville Abbey. She could not forget that, when believing her beloved Hugo to be despoiled of his inheritance, Eugénie was eager to offer her fortune to his participation; and that, in shame and sorrow as in prosperity, she had made proof of a devotion which even a mother—even the mother of an only son—avowed to be worthy of its object.

Some surprise was excited in Oxfordshire, when Dowdeswell received from the Countess instructions of the noblest nature relative to the marriage settlements, and preparations for the bride. At Brooksfield Manor, all was horror,—among the Hardys, all consternation. For four and twenty hours, the borough of Squeamington was in an uproar;—Anodyne, like a bird of the air, having carried the news even into the mayor's chamber.

By degrees, however, they reconciled them-

selves to the startling idea of a young Countess of Greville—a French Countess of Greville!—But a few weeks before, they had been startled by the newspapers with a report that the Earl had fallen in a duel; and it was by no means an unwelcome compromise that, instead of being food for worms, he should be food for Cupids. The fact of the bride being a foreigner, was a relief to the self-love of all who had entertained designs upon Greville Abbey. It was some comfort that a countrywoman of their own had not been preferred in their room.

The only person really to be compassionated in the business, was Horace Greville; who, after receiving congratulations from his friends and creditors, upon the death of his cousin, and even having his orders taken by his tailor for the customary suit of solemn black, found that, instead of wills and testaments, marriage settlements were the order of the day!—He had soon to learn that, so far from being deposited in Père la Chaise, Hugo, eleventh Earl of Greville, had been united at the chapel of the British Embassy to a young and beautiful wife, of descent equal to his own, affording every prospect that

the twelfth Earl would not rejoice in the Christian name of Horace.

From *one* nook, meanwhile, of the neighbourhood of Greville Abbey,—a nook usually so flippant in the discussion of its affairs,—there issued not a syllable concerning the marriage. Hill Hall was silent,—Hill Hall was deserted! Though Fred Massingberd had cut his old father to the soul by inquiring, with a sneer, "Who the devil would be found to buy or hire such a cursed old barn, except to convert it into a manufactory or a boarding-school?"—Hill Hall was announced by the county papers "to be let or sold."—The old people had found a temporary refuge with their son-in-law at Cobham Park; but it was whispered in the strictest confidence, between Dr. and Mrs. Graves and Anodyne, that the person of the poor old squire had previously been subjected to the indignity of an arrest, in consequence of the engagements he had rashly undertaken to liquidate for his worthless son.

Certain it is that the stock of the estate was suddenly sold off; and even young Patroclus

would have fallen to the share of the Hollingses, or some other of Mr. Massingberd's more prosperous tenants, had not Dowdeswell, as a token of affection for the old squire, stepped forward with a handsome price in the name of the Earl of Greville. It is rumoured, moreover, that, on the very day the sale took place, the redoubtable Fred was seen lounging in the Champs Elysées, capitally mounted, in company with Lady Louisa Clare and her brother.

Already the Grevilles had quitted Paris on their return to England. The deep mourning of the Rostanges family was a sufficient pretext for omitting the usual festivities attendant on a foreign wedding. But at the Catholic solemnization, the Countess beheld her beautiful daughter-in-law escorted to the altar by all that was illustrious among the historical names of France.

It was easy, meanwhile, for Eugénie to quit her native country without a tear. Her sister was the companion of her exile. The gentle Sophie, to whom Lady Greville was attaching

herself almost as much as to her sister, was easily persuaded to bear them company to the Abbey. Though inheriting the immense personalty of the Marquis, his estates in Normandy, and the Hotel in the Rue St. Dominique were attached to the Majorat, and descended to his heir; and while the Faubourg St. Germain promises itself, or rather promises the Prince de Chaulieu, that at some future time the lovely widow shall return to Paris to reap in his affection the reward of her exemplary devotion as a wife,—(the valiant Colonel of Cuirassiers, recovered from his wound, having also put forward pressing pretensions to her hand,) Madame de Rostanges remains in England, happy in the seclusion of that princely and beautiful abode which has assumed more than all its former attractions in the eyes of the Countess Dowager.

Completely restored by the restoration of her son, there is no more talk of Torquay for Lady Greville, — no further idea of her removal from her old home.—To Eugénie, there would be profanation in the idea; and she has made it clear to the happy mother

that her presence in her son's household is indispensable, to complete her initiation into the customs of a foreign country.

It would be difficult to imagine a happier or more united ménage than the one at this moment assembled at the Abbey. The tenants have been nobly feasted,—the neighbourhood hospitably welcomed.—Sunshine seems at length to have found its way into the glades of that fine old park.

One circumstance was noticed with peculiar satisfaction by the neighbourhood soon after the re-instatement of the family. The advertisements for the sale of Hill Hall were withdrawn from the county papers, and the placards from its gates; and it is rumoured that the good squire is likely to find his way back to the old spot, and close his eyes under the roof of his fathers. Already young Patroclus is frisking once more in his old paddock; and though Dowdeswell preserves a rigid silence on the subject, Lord Brooks has hinted to his lady "*his* PRIVATE and CONFIDENTIAL *conviction*, that this was effected by *a noble sacrifice* ON THE PART OF LORD

GREVILLE in favour of the *friend of his father!*"—

Both the Countess and the Dowager, meanwhile, promised themselves to cheer the return of the old family by their neighbourly attentions. The Hall has been swept and garnished, and subjected to complete repair, the prodigal, by whose vices the ancient family was reduced to brink of ruin, having forfeited all power to endanger a second time the home and happiness of his father.

"*My health?*"—exclaimed the Countess Dowager, the other day, in reply to the officious interrogations of Anodyne,—mortified to find his professional duty reduced to attendance on the servants' hall.—"I am now too happy to dream of being ill—too busy to be nervous! There is a soul of goodness, we are told, in things evil. My son has been roused to due appreciation of the blessings vouchsafed him, by the reflexions of a death-bed; I, to the happiness of being his mother, by my anguish in the prospect of losing him. We have all, in short, learned the valuable lesson—to confide in Providence and

each other, and to be content!—And to think," added she, turning affectionately toward the gentle Madame de Rostanges, who was occupied with an embroidery-frame by her side, "to think that I am compelled to attribute the accomplishment of my dearest hopes to the influence of A SEASON IN PARIS!"—

THE END.

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